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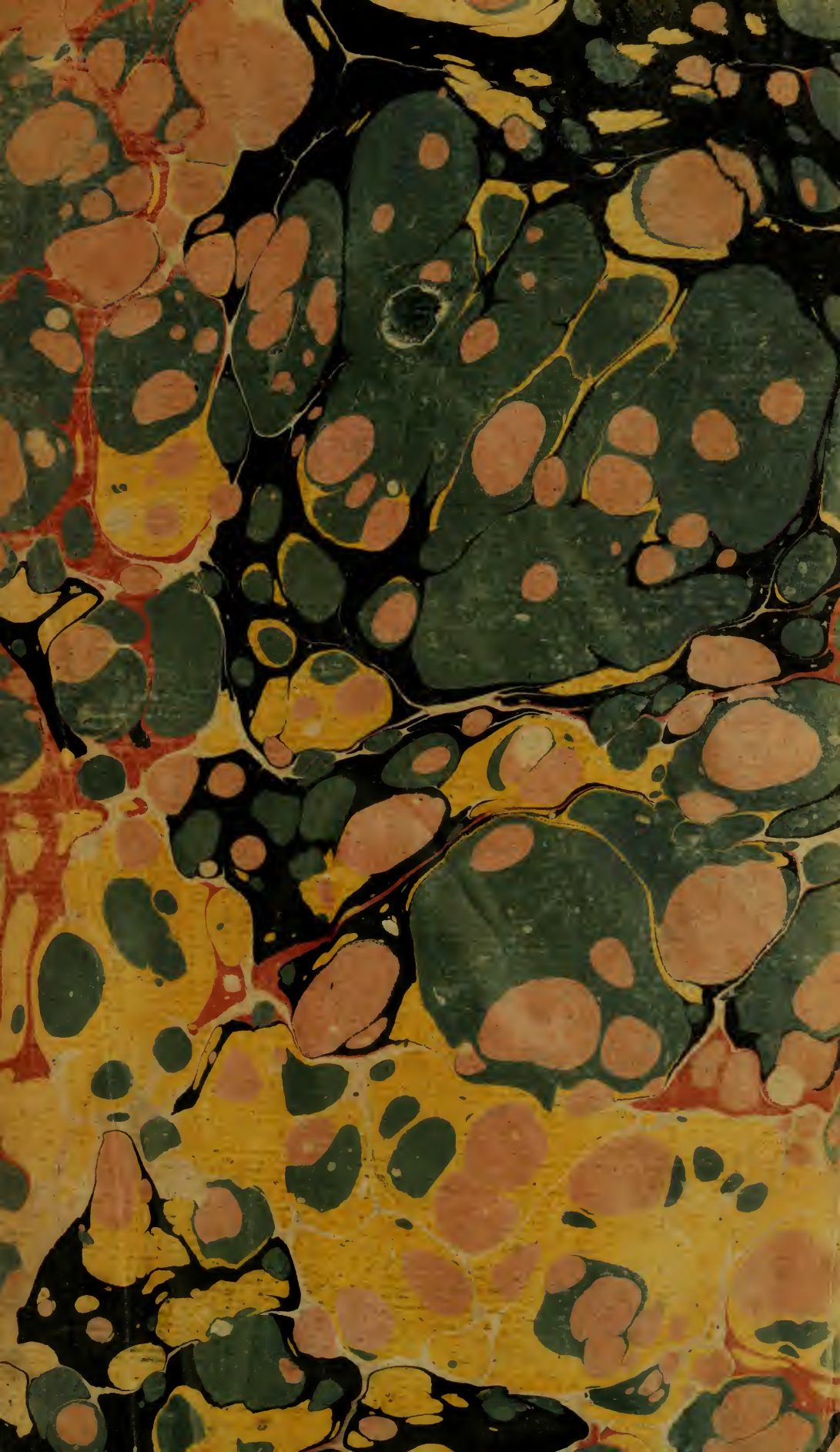
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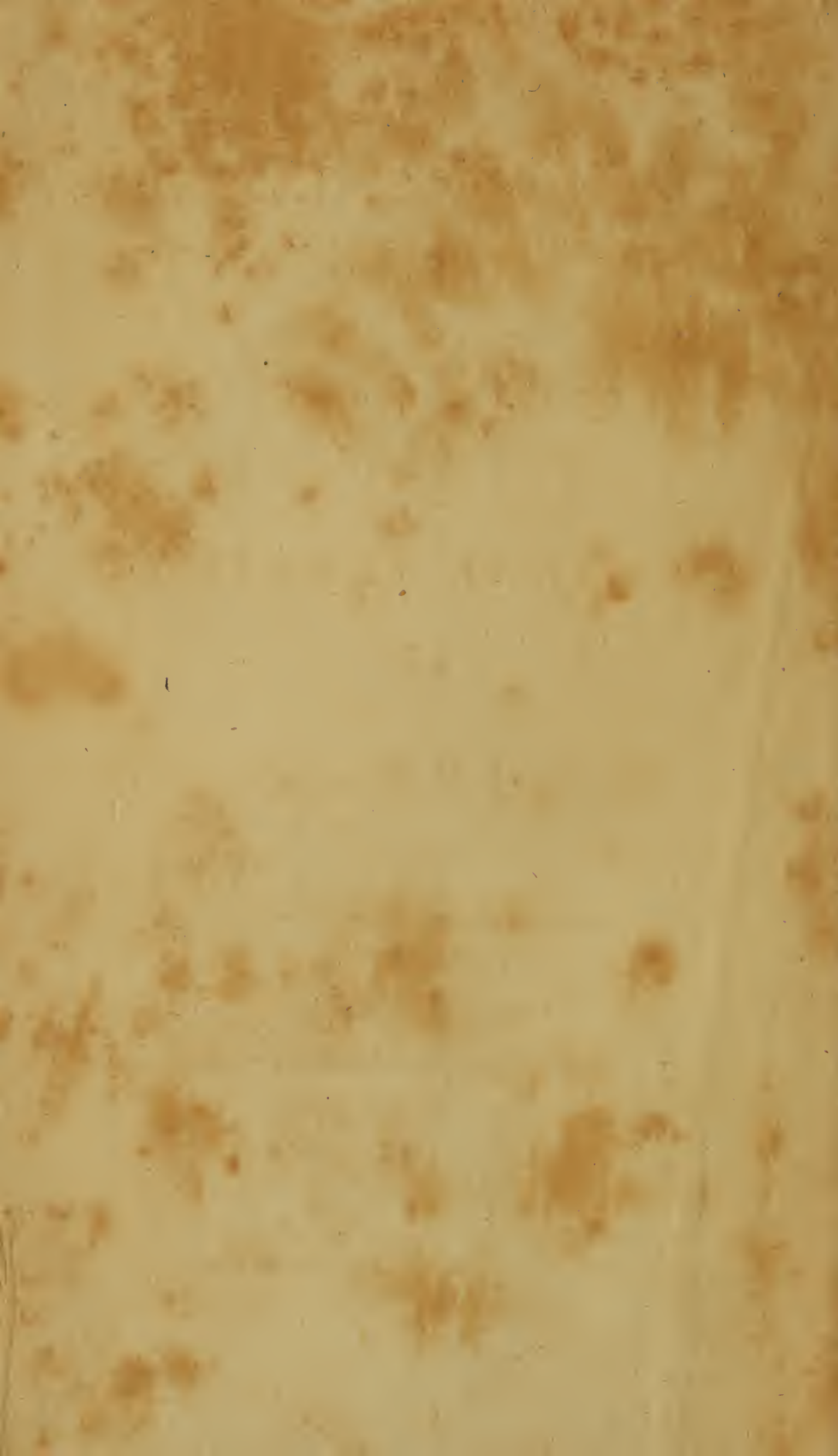


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THE  
ARMINIAN MAGAZINE:

CONSISTING OF

E X T R A C T S

AND

ORIGINAL TREATISES

ON

General Redemption.



VOLUME II.

For the YEAR 1790.



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TO THE  
SUBSCRIBERS

FOR THE

*Arminian Magazine.*

DEAR FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

*THE former volume of this work, like all other human compilations, has both its excellencies and defects. But as we intend to aim at an improvement every year, we shall carefully attend to any judicious remarks, which our candid readers may think proper to suggest. In this volume you have more experimental pieces and letters. Bishop Asbury's journal enlarged may have its use to his own heart, by reminding him of some of the most painful and pleasing circumstances of his life. And as it may quicken his own soul on review, it may likewise remind his old friends of some useful matters; that they may compare the past with the present, and either weep or rejoice, as occasion may require, when they measure their present with their past experience. As no other satisfactory account can be procured, this journal will be the more acceptable to many, as it contains a brief relation of the progress of Methodism, step by step, through the continent of America.*

*The journal of our very venerable friend, John Wesley, needs no recommendation at all. It abounds with the most pleasing and simple accounts of many remarkable places and events in the three kingdoms of Great Britain; which are very acceptable both to Americans and Europeans. But what renders this journal most profitable, is his faithful and circumstantial*

*cumstantial account of the work of GOD; and the instruments employed both for and against it.*

*In this volume, you also have the life and death of our almost inimitable friend, John Fletcher; which, considering the compiler and the matter, brings its own recommendation.*


*It is worthy of observation that, in time, this Magazine may form a complete American library; as most of our publications will be included therein. Unbound tracts are soon damaged or lost; but here all is secured in good binding. And this Magazine may serve the next generation.*

*Great care will be taken to keep up the goodness of the paper, printing and binding; and to render the whole work as acceptable and useful as possible.*

*Signed in behalf of the council,*

FRANCIS ASBURY,

Baltimore, Dec. 8, 1789.

 Some of the first volumes of this work are yet to be had, by a timely application.



THE

## Arminian Magazine,

For JANUARY 1790.



*An APPEAL to the GOSPEL for the true Doctrine  
of DIVINE PREDESTINATION, concorded with the  
Orthodox Doctrine of GOD's FREE-GRACE, and  
MAN'S FREE-WILL.*

By JOHN PLAIFERE, B. D.

[*Concluded from Vol. I. Page 560.*]

## CHAP. IX.

*Concerning the Salvability of the Heathen.*

**T**HAT GOD, for the merit of Christ, will accept of the sincere endeavours of all men who live according to their best abilities, though he was not pleased to bless all with the light of revelation, may be argued in the following manner.

If we make a research into what all religion is founded upon, it will appear principally to be the belief of the Divine goodness. Without this men could not think the Supreme Being to be of such condescension, as to take notice of them and their actions; much less would any credit his having revealed himself to men, or reconciled himself to us by the incarnation and sufferings of his Son. Whatsoever, therefore, weakens the belief of this, must lessen

lessen the credibility of religion. But that GOD should not only have given greater light to the visible church, but also have wholly excluded the bulk of mankind, who never had opportunity of coming within the pale of it, from a possibility of salvation, seems no way reconcileable with it. For, if to have raised out of the womb of nothing, infinite myriads of men, into a condition from which they should unavoidably drop into eternal and unutterable sorrows, be consistent with goodness, contradictions may be true, and all rational deductions but a dream. It therefore seems necessary to conclude, from the benignity of the Divine Nature, that he would give, to all those whom he had brought under the disadvantageous effects of their progenitor's disobedience, a possibility, at least, of avoiding the miserable consequences, and of bettering their condition.

Let us next inquire, whether there hath not been, and may not be, some out of the pale of the church, whose behaviour might in reason incline us to think them fit objects for the Divine compassion. And this scarce needs proof among wise and dispassionate men; it shall, therefore, suffice to mention an instance or two, out of the great variety which ancient and modern accounts afford us.

If one was to enter into the character of *Socrates*, it would be easy to set it in a very advantageous light. The usefulness of his studies and labours in improving and recommending morality, the inoffensiveness of his behaviour, the admirable simplicity and patience which he every where manifested, the occasion of his death, and his meek submission and magnanimous carriage in undergoing it, would justify very shining encomiums. And it is plain he acted upon worthy principles: for it is impossible that the human mind should have had more just and exalted thoughts than those of his, preserved by *Plato*. "I have good hope," saith he, in one of his last conferences, "that those who have ended this life, are not wholly extinct; and that it is far better with the good than the vicious." To pass over many noble sentiments which he uttered, as he drew towards the catastrophe of an illustrious life; what a happy consciousness in his own integrity,



tegrity, becoming diffidence in his own performances, and trust in the Divine Goodness, is there in what he saith to *Crito* ? “ Whether GOD will be pleased to approve of my actions, I know not, but I have this good assurance, that “ I have not been wanting in my endeavours ; and I have not “ less good hopes, that he will favourably accept of them.” The parts which he and some others acted, were indeed so very shining, that some of the ancient \* fathers have not scrupled to esteem and call them Christians ; and a † modern, of equally great learning and good-nature, hath given them a kind of canonization. *Aristides* also, *Phocion*, *Epictetus*, and some other great names, might deservedly be mentioned to their honour ; men, who amidst palpable ignorance, and most flagrant iniquity, dared to exert the most heroic and conspicuous virtues ; but they must be altogether strangers in history, who are unacquainted with their merit and just eulogium.

But if these, and some others of the heroes of gentile antiquity, should be thought to have been over-painted, a man can scarce have the least temptation to flatter the character of the poor modern heathen. And yet many, especially such as have travelled and conversed with them, in those parts where they are not exasperated by the extravagancies, nor corrupted by the commerce of our Europeans, confirmed what the Bishop of *Chiapa* saith of some of them : “ The “ natives of the West Indies are endowed with the most innocent simplicity, being strangers to dissimulation, artifice, “ and fraud ; they serve their superiors with an unbiassed fidelity, and are humble, patient, and submissive towards their “ conquerors, the Spaniards ; they live peaceably, abhor “ strife and contention, and are even ignorant of malice “ and revenge.” And a little after he adds, “ They have “ a genius sharp and full of vivacity, very susceptible of “ learning, and all the impressions of sound doctrine, and “ very readily embrace the Catholic religion. Nor are “ they indeed averse to any part of morality, but have better “ dispositions

\* Just. Mart., Apol. 2â. Idem, Apol. 1â.

† Erasmi. Conviv. Relig.



“ dispositions for it than most of the rest of the world; because  
 “ they live free from the hurry and care of business. When  
 “ they had once received some ideas of our religion, they  
 “ were so inflamed with a desire to have a fuller knowledge  
 “ of it, that their instructors had need of extraordinary pa-  
 “ tience, to moderate their impetuosity, and to answer the  
 “ numerous questions which they propounded. Certainly  
 “ these nations would be the most happy in the world, if  
 “ they had but the knowledge of the true GOD: and those  
 “ who treated them so inhumanly, are obliged to acknow-  
 “ ledge the natural goodness of their tempers, and happy  
 “ dispositions for all kind of virtues.”

Besides these and numberless others, we see from an in-  
 stance in scripture, that a Gentile, Acts x. 2, 3, 4. could  
 be *devout and fear GOD*, could be *constant in prayer*, and *abun-*  
*dant in good works*; and that this was accepted before GOD.  
 And if others in the heathen world do the best they can  
 (as from the accounts we have of them, we must charitably  
 judge they do) who can doubt but the common Father of  
 men looks upon them with the same gracious eye? And  
 though the unfathomable wisdom of his providence thinks  
 not good to carry the gospel into the countries where they are  
 interspersed, yet surely a memorial of them will be preserved  
 before him; and when he shall come to take an account of  
 his servants, in as much as they did not bury, but improve  
 the one talent which they received, he shall admit them  
 into their Master's joy.

If the adorable goodness of GOD, and the innocent  
 simplicity of many in the heathen world, incline us to  
 favourable thoughts of them; let us see what countenance  
 the sacred writings give us herein.

1. There seems to be room for arguing from the many  
 declarations of the justice and equity of GOD, Ezek. xviii.  
 25. 29. &c. Rom. ii. 11. it scarcely appearing to human  
 apprehension, if the sincere heathen (such as, probably, the  
 great patriarch pleaded for) should perish with the wicked,  
 that *the Judge of all the earth would do right*, Gen. xviii.  
 25. For where wilful ignorance, or the rejecting of re-  
 vealed

vealed religion, is not chargeable, what is it that the most just GOD can punish? Not believing or obeying the gospel, it cannot be: for he can require no more of any than he gave them means of attaining to; and can punish only the having acted beneath the abilities men were possessed of: but it is impossible for any to believe what they never heard, or practise what they have no notion of, Rom. x. 14. If men have done their utmost towards improving their faculties, and acted suitably to the deductions made according to the clearest light of reason, or rather, according to *the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world*, John i. 9. shall he, whose ways are most equal, pass by the due use of what he gave, unrewarded, because he gave no more? Surely nothing is naturally good or evil, odious or acceptable to GOD, if patience in afflictions, meekness in bearing affronts and injuries, universal justice and charity, are not approved of by him, when conspicuous even in a heathen.

2. But the supposition we would willingly make, is certainly most agreeable to that impartial goodness and philanthropy of GOD, which the sacred writers so much celebrate. In them we find, that he who is Lord over all, is *no respecter of persons*, Acts x. 34. but is *loving unto every man*, and *rich unto all that call upon him*, Rom. x. 12. that *he is not willing that any should perish*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. but that *all men should come to repentance, and be saved*, 1 Tim. iv. 10. Which expressions must be curbed with extraordinary limitations, if they are only applicable to the visible church. And however some men study evasions, it is not easy to reconcile what the apostle saith of GOD, with their rigid determinations; *who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe*, 1 Tim. iv. 10. For how is he the Saviour of *all men*, if he hath left the greater part without a possibility of attaining salvation? and how is he more *especially* the Saviour of such as believe, if he be in no degree so to others?



3. All the texts declaring the extensiveness of the redemption by Christ, if taken in their most obvious sense, favour such a supposition: as when he is said to have *given himself a ransom for all*, 1 Tim. ii. 6. to be *the Saviour of the world*, 1 John iv. 14. to have *died for all*, 2 Cor. v. 15. to have *tasted death for every man*, Heb. ii. 9. to be *the propitiation for the whole world*, 1 John ii. 2. to have *taken away the sins of the world*, John i. 29. and *reconciled it to GOD*, 2 Cor. v. 19. And doubtless it sets a brighter lustre on the goodness and love of GOD to mankind, and a more eminent value on the mediation of his Son, if he, who before all days saw through the extent of eternity, and knew every individual of the yet unborn ages, did not confine his salvation to men living in some particular times, and under some particular circumstances; but, for the infinite merits of the Redeemer, put the whole race of mankind into a condition of being accepted, upon their sincere endeavour to make the best use of the several means he should vouchsafe to give them. And this is agreeable to the most natural import of St. Paul's comparison, Rom. v. 18. *as by the offence of one, &c.* viz. that the merits of Christ were beneficial to as many as received detriment by the fall of Adam. And the manner of reasoning made use of by that apostle elsewhere, seems to be of the same force; *If one died for all, then were all dead*, 2 Cor. v. 14. For if we at all restrain the merit or design of Christ's death, we render the apostle's argument inconclusive. For if Christ died only for some, it may still be urged, that the rest might not be *dead*, that is, might not be so fallen in Adam, as to need his dying for them.

4. The universality of a future judgment, which the scripture expressly declares, Matt. xxv. 32. Acts xvii. 31. will furnish us with another argument: for reason telleth us, that judgment supposeth the party judged to have been in a capacity of acting well or ill, of acting or not acting; and the scripture confirms it, assuring us, that every man shall be judged *according to his works*, Rev. xx. 12. for no work of a man can be judged either good or bad, which  
it



it was not in his power to do some other way, or omit. Since, then, a wise GOD will make a solemn scrutiny into the works of the heathen as well as of others, it is plain, they might possibly have so acted as to be acquitted. And indeed it cannot be denied, without palpable absurdity, that all men might act according to their best abilities. And to say, that GOD expects any more of them, is to cast a cloud on his wisdom: to affirm that he will punish the not having done more, is to charge him with manifest injustice. If then, *as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law*, Rom. ii. 12. why shall not they who have done well without a revealed law, be saved without having had a promise of it? when GOD shall render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath: tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile, Rom. ii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Many things are said no less favourably, where the heathen world is more directly treated of. That of our Lord seems apposite to their case: *The servant who knew not his Lord's will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes*, Luke xii. 48. comp. 47. And St. Paul telleth the Athenians, that *the times of this heathen ignorance God winked at*, Acts xvii. 30. which surely imports, that he would pass over what men acted in invincible ignorance, and make other proportionable allowances. Neither was the Gentile world absolutely ignorant of all duty to the Supreme Being. Hence the apostle affirms, that the GOD *who made of one blood all nations*, did it with intention that *they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him*, Acts xvii. 26, 27. Which though it might be difficult (as the expressions intimate) was yet possible, since *he is not far from every one of us*; it  
being

being most evident, that *in him we live, and move, and have our being.*

GOD was, then, so far manifested to the heathen by the works of creation, as to render them *without excuse* in their unrighteousness, in their not knowing as much as they might have done, or practising according to their knowledge. They had been excusable, if they had exerted their best abilities: and accordingly the apostle supposeth it possible, that *the Gentiles, not having the law, might by nature do the things contained in the law*, Rom. ii. 14. *And if the uncircumcision, that is by nature, keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?* ver. 26. comp. ver. 27. If the Gentiles born without the covenant (which they cannot help) by the light of nature, or rather the divine light, bestowed on their dispensation, perform the solid duties of the law, shall they not be saved as well as the Jews? Since *there is no respect of persons with GOD*, ver. 11.

If these, or the like reasonings, make this *hypothesis* appear true, it will give a more satisfactory answer to some very considerable questions, than can be done on other principles, viz.

1. If an Indian catechumen should ask one of our missionaries, “how it is consistent, that GOD should so love the world, as to redeem it with the sufferings and death of his own Son, and yet should permit his country, and, as he heard, many more, to remain ignorant of, and unbenefited by it for many ages?” It might be replied, that though GOD, being master of his own favours, had been better to some other nations, in affording them the full knowledge of his will, he might, and did for all this, love the Indians also. For though he required those who might have the knowledge of Christ and his laws, under pain of damnation, to believe in and obey him; yet he would, for the sake of his Son, have mercy on all those who had lived according to the best of their knowledge.

2. If a Jew should ask, “why it is yielded by the first preachers of christianity, and the uncontradicted suffrage  
“ of



“ of christian divines, that such of his ancestors as believed  
 “ and acted according to the best light afforded under the  
 “ legal dispensation, were saved through the merits of Christ;  
 “ since it doth not appear, that many of them had a clear  
 “ notion of such a Messias as Jesus was, or of the necessity  
 “ of such an one; and it is evident, that the generality ra-  
 “ ther expected a temporal deliverance by their Messiah?”  
 It might be answered, that GOD, in goodness, would save  
 such as made the best use of the types and shadows afforded  
 them, though now, the substance of them being manifested,  
 life and blessedness are to be expected only through faith in,  
 and in obedience to, his Son Jesus.

3. If any are disconsolate at the case of an infant, who  
 through chance and negligence died unbaptized; or doubt  
 of the salvation of such as were baptized, because they probably  
 died without actual faith; or deny the salvability of some idiots  
 and madmen, who seemingly are never capable of such faith:  
 they may be reminded, that a good and wise GOD can  
 require nothing of any, which he knows to be impossible;  
 and that it was a very unworthy servant, who taxed his  
 Lord with expecting to reap where he had not sown.

There are some other questions of near affinity to this,  
 viz. Whether all without the bounds of the visible church,  
 are absolutely destitute of revelation? How far the heathen  
 world, since the gospel-dispensation, is charged with cri-  
 minal infidelity? These might well deserve a distinct con-  
 sideration; but it shall only be observed here:

1. It is probable, that the revelation made to Adam,  
 or some considerable remains of it, continued a long time,  
 even among the most degenerate of his race. Noah, as he  
 had long inculcated them on the minds of the old, so he  
 doubtless delivered them to the renewed world, after the  
 flood: nor could the worst of his posterity be ignorant of  
 them; and even to corrupt them, must be a work of time.  
 The holy line preserved them in a great measure pure,  
 the rest could not quickly lose them; so that it is hard to  
 say, when any part of mankind was first wholly destitute of  
 revelation: the almost universal custom of sacrificing could prob-  
 ably



bably have no other original. The belief of the soul's immortality, and of a state of future rewards and punishments, hath been diffused through all ages and nations, and is still almost every where to be traced; which are rationally judged to be parts of the primitive traditions. Now if we should suppose, that the having a revelation communicated to them, is necessary for putting men into a salvable state; yet why this partial one should not be salutary to those to whom no better was made, as well as the less perfect dispensation of Moses was to the Jews before Christ, no shadow of reason can be assigned.

2. As to the great part of the world, which, since the publication of the gospel, hath not been Christian; their case is most hazardous, who have had opportunities of knowing the doctrine of Christ, but made no use of them. And the question about the salvability of particular persons in such circumstances, cannot be resolved, without we had an exact knowledge of their neglect or unbelief; but a general answer is very obvious. A neglect in acquiring a knowledge of the christian faith, is faulty or excusable, according as men had, or wanted, motives to think it reasonable or necessary. And the blame for all unbelief, is aggravated or extenuated, proportionably as the credibility of the teacher, or the arguments used by him, were more or less sufficient, and fit to have convinced the hearers, if they had judged impartially. But perhaps it would not be difficult to give a moral demonstration, that a far greater proportion of them, than nine parts out of ten, have scarce heard of the christian profession, or at most can have but a very imperfect notion of it, and of the grounds on which it is founded. An huge part of mankind very long had, or still have, little or no intercourse with Christians: corruption and ignorance long overspread the face of religion; vile opinions prevailed, and wicked practices were indulged in the church; and some, or all of them, are still lamentably prevalent in a great part of her, which must needs divert many from embracing the faith, and give them strong prejudices against it: and, consequently, their infidelity

lity is rather chargeable on Christians, so miserably recommending their religion.

Again, at this day, christian princes and states are deplorably wanting in taking proper measures for the instruction, even of their own vassals and subjects; and Christians of all ranks, not only express no concern for the conversion of the neighbouring heathen, but render their religion odious to them, by their cruelty, avarice, lust, or perfidiousness. And where attempts have been made for propagating our religion, it hath frequently been by such, as having departed from the simplicity and purity of the gospel, have confounded it with fables, error, and superstition. All which considered, the heathen, who are nearest to, and have most conversation with us, may be looked upon by GOD, as under equal disadvantages with those who never heard of the name of Christ: and though there be an heavy guilt in their infidelity, it must devolve from the infidel on the Christian.

And now, upon the whole, Is it not more honourable to the justice, wisdom, and goodness of the Supreme Judge of the world? Doth it not set a more extensive value on the merits of our dear Redeemer? Is it not more consonant to the reason of mankind in general, and to justice and charity in ourselves, to hope well of those whose endeavours were laudable, though they were, through the iniquity of time, place, or other circumstances, less happy than ourselves as to divine assistances; and to leave them, whom we have juster reasons to despair of, unjudged, to the pleasure of their Creator? Which, if an error, will ever be venial, as being shadowed by the beautiful veil of humanity, good nature, and charity.

*End of the Doctrine of Predestination concorded with  
Free Grace.*

ORIGINAL



## ORIGINAL SERMONS

BY THE

REV. JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

## SERMON XIII.

On 1 CORINTHIANS X. 13.

*There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man. But GOD is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

1. **I**N the foregoing part of the chapter the apostle has been reciting on the one hand, the unparalleled mercies of GOD to the Israelites; and on the other, the unparalleled ingratitude of that disobedient and gainfaying people. And all these things, as the apostle observes, *were written for our ensample*: that we might take warning from them, so as to avoid their grievous sins, and escape their terrible punishment. He then adds that solemn and important caution, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

2. But if we observe these words attentively, will there not appear a considerable difficulty in them, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall*? If any man only *thinks he stands*, he is in no danger of falling. It is not possible that any one should fall, if he only *thinks he stands*. The same difficulty occurs, according to our translation, in those well known words of our Lord, (the importance of which we may easily learn, from their being repeated in the gospel no less than eight times,) *To him that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even what he seemeth to have. That which he seemeth to have!* Nay, if he only *seems to have it*, it is impossible it should be taken away. None can take away from another what he



he only *seems to have*. What a man only *seems to have*, he cannot possibly lose. This difficulty may at first appear impossible to be surmounted. It is really so; it cannot be surmounted, if the common translation be allowed. But if we observe the proper meaning of the original word, the difficulty vanishes away. It may be allowed that the word *δοκεῖ* does (sometimes, at least in some authors) mean no more than *to seem*. But I much doubt whether it ever bears that meaning, in any part of the inspired writings. By a careful consideration of every text in the New Testament, wherein this word occurs, I am fully convinced that it no where lessens, but every where strengthens the sense of the word to which it is annexed. Accordingly *ὁ δοκεῖ ἔχειν*, does not mean, *what he seemeth to have*; but on the contrary, *what he assuredly hath*. And so *ὁ δοκῶν ἐσθάναι*, not *he that seemeth to stand*, or *he that thinketh he standeth*: But *he that assuredly standeth*: he who standeth so fast, that he does not appear to be in any danger of falling: he that faith, like David, *I shall never be moved: thou, Lord, hast made my hill so strong*. Yet at that very time, thus faith the Lord, *Be not high-minded, but fear. Else shalt thou be cut off*: else shalt thou also be moved from thy steadfastness. The strength which thou assuredly hast, shall be taken away. As firmly as thou didst really stand, thou wilt fall into sin, if not into hell.

3. But lest any should be discouraged by the consideration of those who once ran well, and were afterwards overcome by temptation; lest the fearful heart should be utterly cast down, supposing it impossible for them to stand, the apostle subjoins to that serious exhortation, these comfortable words, *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but GOD is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it*.

I. 1. Let us begin with the observation which ushers in this comfortable promise, *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man*. Our translators seem

to have been sensible that this expression, *common to man*, does by no means reach the force of the original word. Hence they substitute another word in the margin, *moderate*. But this seems to be less significant than the other, and farther from the meaning of it. Indeed it is not easy to find any single word in the English tongue, which answers the word ἀνθρώπινος. I believe the sense of it can only be expressed by some such circumlocution as this: "Such as is suited to the nature and circumstances of man: such as every man may reasonably expect, if he considers the nature of his body and his soul, and his situation in the present world." If we duly consider these, we shall not be surpris'd at any temptation that hath befallen us: seeing it is no other than such a creature, in such a situation, has all reason to expect.

2. Consider, first, the nature of that body with which your soul is connected. How many are the evils, which it is every day, every hour liable to? Weakness, sickness and disorders of a thousand kinds, are its natural attendants. Consider the inconceivably minute fibres, threads abundantly finer than hair, (called from thence capillary vessels,) whereof every part of it is composed; consider the innumerable multitude of equally fine pipes and strainers, all filled with circulating juices! And will not the breach of a few of these fibres, or the obstruction of a few of these tubes, particularly in the brain, or heart, or lungs, destroy our ease, health, strength, if not life itself? Now if we observe that all pain implies temptation, how numberless must the temptations be, which will beset every man, more or less, sooner or later, while he dwells in this corruptible body?

3. Consider, secondly, the present state of the soul, as long as it inhabits the house of clay. I do not mean in its unregenerate state, while it lies in darkness and the shadow of death; under the dominion of the prince of darkness, without hope, and without GOD in the world. No: look upon men who are raised above that deplorable state. See those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Yet still how weak is their understanding? How limited its extent?

How



How confused, how inaccurate are our apprehensions, of even the things that are round about us? How liable are the wisest of men to mistake? To form false judgments? To take falsehood for truth, and truth for falsehood? Evil for good, and good for evil? What starts, what wanderings of imagination are we continually subject to? In how many instances does the corruptible body press down the soul? And how many are the temptations which we have to expect, even from these innocent infirmities?

4. Consider, thirdly, what is the present situation of even those that fear GOD. They dwell on the ruins of a disordered world, among men, that know not GOD, that care not for him, and whose heart is fully set in them to do evil. How many are constrained to cry out, *Wo is me, that I am constrained to dwell with Mesek: to have my habitation among the tents of Kedar*, among the enemies of GOD and man! How immensely out-numbered are those that would do well, by them that neither fear GOD nor regard man. And how striking is Cowley's observation! If a man that was armed cap-a-pie, was closed in by a thousand naked *Indians*, their number would give them such advantage over him, that it would be scarce possible for him to escape. What hope would there be for a naked, unarmed man to escape, who was surrounded by a thousand armed men? Now this is the case of every good man. He is not armed either with force or fraud, and is turned out naked as he is, among thousands that are armed with the whole armour of Satan, and provided with all the weapons which the prince of this world can supply out of the armoury of hell. If then he is not destroyed, yet how must a good man be tempted in the midst of this evil world?

5. But is it only from wicked men that temptations arise to them that fear GOD? It is very natural to imagine this: and almost every one thinks so. Hence how many of us have said in our hearts, "O! if my lot were but cast among good men, among those that loved, or even feared GOD, I should be free from all these temptations." Perhaps you would: probably you would not find the same  
fort.



fort of temptations, which you have now to encounter. But you would surely meet with temptations of some other kind, which you would find equally hard to bear. For even good men in general, though sin has not dominion over them, yet are not freed from the remains of it. They have still the remains of an evil heart, ever prone to *depart from the living GOD*. They have the seeds of pride, of anger, of foolish desire; indeed of every unholy temper. And any of these, if they do not continually watch and pray, may, and naturally will spring up, and trouble not themselves only, but all that are round about them. We must not therefore depend upon finding no temptation, from those that fear, yea, in a measure, love GOD. Much less must we be surprised, if some of those who once loved GOD in sincerity, should lay greater temptations in our way, than many of those who never knew him.

6. "But can we expect to find any temptation from those that are *perfected in love*?" This is an important question, and deserves a particular consideration. I answer, first, You may find every kind of temptation, from those who *suppose* they are perfected, when indeed they are not; and so you may, secondly, from those who once really were so, but are now moved from their steadfastness. And if you are not aware of this, if you think they are still what they were once, the temptation will be harder to bear. Nay, thirdly, even those who *stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free*, who are now really perfect in love, may still be an occasion of temptation to you. For they are still encompassed with infirmities. They may be dull of apprehension: they may have a natural heedlessness, or a treacherous memory: they may have too lively an imagination: and any of these may cause little improprieties, either in speech or behaviour, which though not sinful in themselves may try all the grace you have. Especially if you impute to perverseness of will (as it is very natural to do) what is really owing to defect of memory, or weakness of understanding: if these appear to you to be voluntary mistakes, which are really involuntary. So proper was the

the answer which a saint of GOD (now in *Abraham's* bosom) gave me some years ago, when I said, *Jenny*, surely now your mistress and you, can neither of you be a trial to the other, as GOD has saved you both from sin: "O Sir," said she, "if we are saved from sin, we still have infirmities enough to try all the grace that GOD has given us."

7. But besides evil men, do not evil spirits also continually surround us on every side? Do not Satan and his angels continually go about, seeking whom they may devour? Who is out of the reach of their malice and subtlety? Not the wisest or best of the children of men. *The servant is not above his master.* If then they tempted him, will they not tempt us also? Yea, it may be, should GOD see good to permit, more or less to the end of our lives. *No temptation therefore hath taken us*, which we had not reason to expect, either from our body or soul, either from evil spirits or evil men, yea or even from good men, till our spirits return to GOD that gave them.

II. 1. Meantime what a comfort is it to know, with the utmost certainty, that *GOD is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able.* He knoweth what our ability is, and cannot be mistaken. *He knoweth precisely whereof we are made: He remembereth that we are but dust.* And he will suffer no temptation to befall us, but such as is proportioned to our strength. Not only his justice requires this, which could not punish us for not resisting any temptation, if it was so disproportioned to our strength, that it was impossible for us to resist it. Not only his mercy; that tender mercy, which is over us, as well as over all his works: but, above all, his faithfulness; seeing all his words are faithful and true; and the whole tenor of his promises altogether agrees with that declaration, *As thy day, so thy strength shall be.*

2. In that execrable slaughter-house, the *Romish* inquisition, (most unfortunately called "The house of Mercy!") it is the custom of those holy butchers, while they are tearing a man's sinews upon the rack, to have the physician of the house standing by. His business is, from time to time, to observe



observe the eyes, the pulse, and other circumstances of the sufferer, and to give notice, when the torture has continued so long as it can, without putting an end to his life: that it may be preserved long enough for him to undergo the residue of their tortures. But notwithstanding all the physician's care, he is sometimes mistaken: and death puts a period to the patient's sufferings, before his tormentors are aware. We may observe something like this in our own case. In whatever sufferings or temptations we are, our great physician never departs from us. He is about our bed, and about our path. He observes every symptom of our distress, that it may not rise above our strength. And he cannot be mistaken concerning us. He knows the souls and bodies which he has given us. He sees exactly how much we can endure, with our present degree of strength. And if this be not sufficient, he can increase it, to whatever degree it pleases him. Nothing therefore is more certain, than that in consequence of his wisdom, as well as his justice, mercy and faithfulness, he never will, he never can suffer us to be tempted above that we are able: above the strength which he either hath given already, or will give as soon as we need it.

III. 1. *He will with the temptation also* (this is the third point we are to consider) *make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it.*

The word *ἐκτασις* which we render *a way to escape*, is extremely significant. The meaning of it is nearly expressed by the English word *out-let*; but more exact by the old word *out-gate*, still frequently used by the Scottish writers. It literally means *a way out*. And this GOD will either find or make: which he that hath all wisdom, as well as all power in heaven and earth, can never be at a loss how to do.

2. Either he *makes a way to escape* out of the temptation, by removing the occasion of it, or *in the temptation*: that is, the occasion remaining as it was, it is a temptation no longer. First, he makes a way to escape out of the temptation, by removing the occasion of it. The histories of mankind



thankind, of the church in particular, afford us numberless instances of this. And many have occurred in our own memory, and within the little circle of our acquaintance. One of many I think it worth while to relate, as a memorable instance of the faithfulness of GOD, in making a way to escape out of temptation. *Elizabeth Chadsey*, then living in *London* (whose daughter is living at this day, and is no dishonour to her parent) was advised to administer to her husband, who was supposed to leave much substance behind him. But when a full inquiry into his circumstances was made, it appeared that this supposition was utterly destitute of foundation; and that he not only left nothing at all behind him, but also was very considerably in debt. It was not long after his burial, that a person came to her house, and said, "Mrs. *Chadsey*, you are much indebted to your landlord, and he has sent me to demand the rent that is due to him." She answered, "Sir, I have not so much money in the world: indeed I have none at all!" "But," said he, "have you nothing that will fetch money?" She replied, "Sir, you see all that I have. I have nothing in the house, but these six little children." "Then," said he, "I must execute my writ, and carry you to Newgate. But it is a hard case. I will leave you here till to-morrow, and will go and try, if I cannot persuade your landlord to give you time." He returned the next morning, and said, "I have done all I can. I have used all the arguments I could think of, but your landlord is not to be moved. He vows, if I do not carry you to prison without delay, I shall go thither myself." She answered, "You have done *your* part. The will of the Lord be done!" He said, "I will venture to make one trial more, and will come again in the morning." He came in the morning, and said, "Mrs. *Chadsey*, GOD has undertaken your cause. None can give you any trouble now: for your landlord died last night. But he has left no will: and no one knows who is heir to his estate."

3. Thus GOD is able to deliver out of temptations, by removing the occasion of them. But are there not temptations, the occasions of which cannot be taken away? Is it  
not

not a striking instance of this kind, which we have in a late publication? "I was walking" (says the writer of the letter) "over *Dover* cliffs, in a calm, pleasant evening, with a person whom I tenderly loved, and to whom I was to be married in a few days. While we were engaged in earnest conversation, her foot slipped, she fell down, and I saw her dashed in pieces on the beach. I lifted up my hands, and cried out, "This evil admits of no remedy. I must now go mourning all my days! My wound is incurable. It is impossible I should ever find such another woman! One so every way fitted for me." I added in an agony, "This is such an affliction, as even GOD himself cannot redress!" And just as I uttered the words, I awoke: for it was a dream!" Just so can GOD remove any possible temptation! Making it like a dream when one awaketh!

4. Thus is GOD able to deliver out of temptation, by taking away the very ground of it. And he is equally able to deliver in the temptation, which perhaps is the greatest deliverance of all. I mean suffering the occasion to remain as it was, he will take away the bitterness of it: so that it shall not be a temptation at all: but only an occasion of thanksgiving. How many proofs of this have the children of GOD, even in their daily experience? How frequently are they encompassed with trouble? Or visited with pain or sickness? And when they cry unto the Lord, at some times he takes away the cup from them: he removes the trouble, or sickness, or pain: and it is as though it never had been; at other times, he does not make any outward change: outward trouble, or pain, or sickness continues; but the consolations of the Holy One so increase, as to over-balance them all. And they can boldly declare,

"Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,  
When thou my GOD art near."

5. An eminent instance of this kind of deliverance is that which occurs in the life of that excellent man, the Marquis de Renty. When he was in a violent fit of the rheumatism,



rheumatism, a friend asked him, "Sir, are you in much pain?" He answered, "My pains are extreme: but through the mercy of GOD, I give myself up, not to them, but to him." It was in the same spirit that my own father answered, though exhausted with a severe illness, (an ulcer in the bowels, which had given him little rest day or night, for upwards of seven months.) When I asked, "Sir, are you in pain now?" He answered, with a strong and loud voice, "GOD does indeed chasten me with pain; yea, all my bones with strong pain. But I thank him for all; I bless him for all; I love him for all."

6. We may observe one more instance of a somewhat similar kind, in the life of the Marquis *de Renty*. When his wife, whom he very tenderly loved, was exceedingly ill, and supposed to be near death, a friend took the liberty to inquire, how he felt himself on the occasion? He replied, "I cannot but say, that this trial affects me in the most tender part. I am exquisitely sensible of my loss. I feel more than it is possible to express. And yet I am so satisfied, that the will of GOD is done, and not the will of a vile sinner, that were it not for fear of giving offence to others, I could dance and sing!" Thus the merciful, the just, the faithful GOD, will in one way or other, *in every temptation make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.*

7. This whole passage is fruitful of instruction. Some of the lessons which we may learn from it are,

First, *Let him that most assuredly standeth, take heed lest he fall into murmuring:* lest he say in his heart, "Surely no one's case is like mine: no one was ever tried like me." Yea, ten thousand. *There has no temptation taken you,* but such as is *common to man:* such as you might reasonably expect, if you consider *what you are*, a sinner born to die, a sinful inhabitant of a mortal body, liable to numberless inward and outward sufferings: and *where you are*, in a shattered, disordered world, surrounded by evil men and evil spirits: consider this, and you will not repine at the common lot, the general condition of humanity.



8. Secondly, Let him that standeth take *heed lest he fall*; lest he tempt *GOD*, by thinking or saying, “This is insupportable: this is too hard: I can never get through it; my burden is heavier than I can bear.” Not so: unless something is too hard for *GOD*. He will not suffer you to be *tempted above that ye are able*. He proportions the burden to your strength. If you want more strength, ask and it shall be given you.

9. Thirdly, *Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall*, lest he tempt *GOD* by *unbelief*, by distrusting his faithfulness. Hath he said, In every temptation he will make a way to escape? And shall he not do it? Yea, verily. And

Far, far above thy thought  
His counsel shall appear,  
When fully he the work hath wrought;  
That caus'd thy needless fear.

10. Let us then receive every trial with calm resignation, and with humble confidence; that he who hath all power, all wisdom, all mercy and all faithfulness, will first support us in every temptation, and then deliver us out of all: so that in the end, all things shall work together for good, and we shall happily experience, that all these things were for our profit, that we *might be partakers of his holiness*.

*London, October 7, 1786.*

N. B. The whole of the Reverend Mr. Wesley's Journal, is intended to be published in the course of these Magazines.

## AN EXTRACT

*Of the* Revd. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

Acts v. 38, 39.

If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of GOD, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against GOD.



## PREFACE.

1. **W**HEN at first men began to lay to my charge, things which I knew not, I often thought, "Had I but two or three intimate friends, who knew what my life and conversation were, they might easily speak what they had seen and heard, and all such aspersions would fall to the ground." But I perceived my mistake, as soon as I had two or three, who were my friends indeed, not in name only. For a way was easily found to prevent their being of any such use, as I once imagined they would be. This was done at a stroke, and that once for all, by giving them and me a *new name*: A name, which however insignificant in itself, yet had this peculiar effect, utterly to disable me from removing, whatever accusation might for the time to come be cast upon me, by invalidating all which those who knew me best, were able to say in my behalf: Nay, which any others could say. For how notorious is it, that if any man dare to open his mouth in my favour, it needs only be replied, "I suppose you are a *Methodist* too," and all he has said is to pass for nothing.

2. Hence, on the one hand, many who knew what my conversation was, were afraid to declare the truth, lest the same reproach should fall upon them: and those few who broke through this fear, were soon disabled from declaring it with effect, by being immediately ranked with him they defended. What impartial man then can refuse to say, *It*



*is permitted to thee to answer for thyself.* Only do not add, But, "*Thou shalt not persuade me, though thou dost persuade me: I am resolved to think as I did before.*" Not so, if you are a candid man. You have heard one side already. Hear the other. Weigh both. Allow for human weakness. And then judge as you desire to be judged.

3. What I design in the following extract is, openly to declare to all mankind, what it is that the *Methodists* (so called) have done, and are doing now; or rather, what it is that *GOD* hath done, and is still doing in our land. For it is not the work of man which hath lately appeared. All who calmly observe it must say, *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*

4. Such a work this hath been in many respects, as neither we nor our fathers had known. Not a few whose sins were of the most flagrant kind, drunkards, swearers, thieves, whoremongers, adulterers, have been brought *from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto GOD.* Many of these were rooted in their wickedness, having long gloried in their shame, perhaps for a course of many years, yea even to hoary hairs. Many had not so much as a notional faith, being Jews, Arians, Deists or Atheists. Nor has *GOD* only made bare his arm in these last days, in behalf of open publicans and sinners; but many of the *Pharisees* also have believed on him, of the *righteous that needed no repentance:* and having received the sentence of death in themselves, have then heard the voice that raised the dead. Have been made partakers of an inward, vital religion, even *righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

5. The manner wherein *GOD* hath wrought this work, is as strange as the work itself. In any particular soul, it has generally, if not always, been wrought in one moment. *As the lightning shining from heaven, so was the coming of the Son of man,* either to bring peace or a sword; either to wound or to heal, either to convince of sin, or to give remission of sins in his blood. And the other circumstances attending it have been equally remote from what human wisdom would have expected. So true is that word, *my ways*



*ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts.*

6. These extraordinary circumstances seem to have been designed by *GOD*, for the further manifestation of his work, to cause his power to be known, and to awaken the attention of a drowsy world. And yet even from these, some have drawn their grand objection against the whole work. *We never saw it*, say they, *on this fashion*. Therefore the work is not of *GOD*. To prove which farther, they have not only greatly misrepresented many circumstances that really were; but have added many that were not, often without any regard either to truth or probability. A bare recital of those facts which were *not done in a corner*, is the best answer to this sort of objections. To those which have been judged to be of more weight, I have occasionally given a more particular answer.

7. Yet I know even this will by no means satisfy the far greater part of those who are now offended. And for a plain reason, Because they *will never read it*: They are resolved to hear one side, and one only. I know also that many who *do* read it, will be just of the same mind they were before; because they have fixt their judgment already, and *do not regard any thing which such a fellow can say*. Let them see to that. I have done my part. I have delivered mine own soul. Nay, I know that many will be greatly offended, at this very account. It must be so from the very nature of the things, which are therein related. And the best appellation I expect from them is, that of a fool, a madman, an enthusiast. All that in me lies is, to relate simple truth, in as inoffensive a manner as I can. Let *GOD* give it the effect which pleaseth him, and which is most for his glory!

8. May he who hath the keys of the house of David, who openeth and no man shutteth, open a great and effectual door by whom it pleaseth him, for his everlasting gospel! May he send by whom he will send, so it may run and be glorified more and more! May he ride on, conquering and to conquer, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in: and the earth be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea!

JOURNAL

## JOURNAL

From *August* 12, 1738, to *November* 1, 1739.

**S**ATURDAY *Aug.* 12. about seven in the evening we came to *Neu-Kirche*, a town about 24 miles from *Hernhuth*. Mr. *Schneider* (the minister of it who had desired us to take his house in our way) was not at home: but we found one Mr. *Manætius* there, the minister of a neighbouring town, who walked with us in the morning ten miles, to *Hauswalde*, where he lived. He told us, "That the *Lutherans* as well as the *Papists*, were irreconcilable enemies to the brethren of *Hernhuth*: That the generality of the *Lutheran* clergy, were as bitter against them as the *Jesuits* themselves: That none of his neighbours durst go thither (unless by stealth) being sure of suffering for it, if discovered: That to prevent any of *Hernhuth* from coming to them, the *Electors* had forbid, under a severe penalty, any number of persons, exceeding three, to meet together on a religious account; and that he himself, for having a little society in his own parish, had been summoned to appear before the consistory at *Dresden*." Yea let the kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed! He that sitteth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn; the Lord shall have them in derision.

We left *Hauswalde* in the afternoon, and in the evening came to *Dresden*. But the officer at the gate would not suffer us to come in; so that we were obliged to go on to the next village: which leaving early in the morning, on *Thursday* in the afternoon we came to *Leipzig*.

We were now kept only an hour at the gate, and then conducted to Mr. *Arnold's*, who had invited us when we were in the town before, to make his house our home. A few we found here too, who desire to know nothing but *Jesus Christ and him crucified*. And from them we had letters to *Halle*, whither we came on *Friday* 18. But the king of *Prussia's* tall men (who kept the gates) would not suffer

Mr.



Mr. *Brown* to come in. Me they admitted (in honour of my profession) after I had waited about two hours: and one of them went with me to the prince of *Hesse*, who after a few questions, gave me leave to lodge in the city. Thence he shewed me to Mr. *Gotschalck's* lodgings, to whom I had letters from *Leipsig*. He read them and said, *My brother, what you find here, you will use as your own. And if you want any thing else, tell us and you shall have it.*

I told them, "My companion was without the gate." They soon procured admittance for him. And we were indeed as at home; for I have hardly seen such little children as these, even at *Hernhuth*.

*Saturday 19.* I waited on Professor *Francke*, who behaved with the utmost humanity; and afterwards on Professor *Knappe*, to whom also I am indebted for his open, friendly behaviour. Between ten and eleven, seven of the brethren set out with us, one of whom went with us two days journey. It was the dusk of the evening on *Sunday 20*, when, wet and weary, we reached *Jena*.

*Monday 21.* We visited the schools there; the rise of which (as we were informed) was occasioned thus:

About the year 1704 Mr. *Stoltius*, a student at *Jena*, began to speak of faith in Christ; which he continued to do, till he took his master's degree, and read public lectures. About twelve or fifteen students were awakened and joined with him in prayer and building up one another. At this (after various calumnies spread abroad and persecutions occasioned thereby) the consistory was offended, and issued out a commission to examine him. In consequence of the report made to the consistory by these commissioners, he was forbid to read any public lectures, or to hold any meetings with his friends. Not long after an order was given, by which he was excluded from the holy communion. He was also to have been expelled the university: But this he prevented by a voluntary retirement.

Yet one of the commissioners, who had been sent by the D. of *Weymar* (one of the lords of *Jena*) informed the Duke that according to his judgment *Stoltius* was an innocent and  
holy



holy man. On this the duke sent for him to *Weymar*, and fixed him in a living there. There likewise he awakened many, and met with them to pray and read the scriptures together. But it was not long that the city could bear him. For he boldly rebuked all vice, and that in all persons, neither sparing the courtiers, nor the duke himself. Consequently, his enemies every where increased, and many persecutions followed. In fine, he was forbid to have any private meetings, and was to have been deposed from the ministry; when GOD calling him to himself, took him away from the evil to come.

Before *Stoltius* left *Jena*, *Budæus* also began to preach the real gospel, as did *Christius* soon after; whereby some awakening continued till the year 1724. A few of the townsmen then agreed, to maintain a student, to be a school-master for some poor children. They afterwards kept several schoolmasters: But about 1728, all of them going away, the school was broke up, and the children quite neglected. Professor *Budæus* being informed of this, earnestly recommended the consideration of it to the students in his house: And about ten of them, among whom was Mr. *Spangenberg*, took upon themselves the care of those children. Their number soon increased, which gave great offence to the other schoolmasters in the town; and not long after to the magistrates of the town, and to the senate of the university. The offence soon spread to the pastors, the professors, the consistory, and the princes who are lords of *Jena*. But it pleased GOD to move one of them, the prince of *Eisenach*, who had the chief power there, to stop the open persecution, by forbidding either the senate or consistory to molest them. He likewise wholly exempted them for the time to come from the jurisdiction of both, ordering that all complaints against them for the time to come should be cognizable only by himself. But during the persecution, the number of schools was increased from one to three, (one in each suburb of the city) the number of teachers to above thirty, and of children to above three hundred.

There are now thirty-one constant teachers, ten in each school, and three or four supernumerary, to supply accidental defects. Four of the masters are appointed to punish, who are affixt to no one school. Each of the schools being divided into two classes, and taught five hours a day, every one of the thirty masters has one hour in a day to teach. All the masters have a conference about the schools every Monday. They have a second meeting on *Thursday*, chiefly for prayer. And a third every *Saturday*.

Once in half a year they meet to fill up the places of those masters who are gone away. And the number has never decreased; fresh ones still offering themselves, as the former leave the university.

The present method wherein they teach is this:

There are always two classes in each school. In the lower, children from six to ten or twelve years old are taught to read. They are then removed to the other class, in which are taught, the holy scriptures, arithmetick, and whatever else it may be useful for children to learn.

In the morning from eight to nine they are all catechized, and instructed in the first principles of christianity, either from *Luther's* smaller catechism, or from some texts of holy scripture.

From nine to ten the smaller children are taught their letters and syllables; and the larger read the bible. From ten to eleven those in the lower class learn and repeat some select verses of holy scripture, chiefly relating to the foundation of the faith. Meanwhile those in the upper, learn arithmetick.

In the afternoon from one to two all the children are employed as from nine to ten in the morning. From two to three the smaller children learn and repeat *Luther's* smaller catechism, while the larger are taught to write.

Every *Sunday* there is a public catechizing on some text of scripture; at which all persons who desire it may be present.

In the afternoon we left *Jena*, several of the brethren accompanying us out of town. At five having just passed



through *Weymar*, we met Mr. *Ingham* going for *Hernhuth*. We all turned aside to a neighbouring village, where having spent a comfortable evening together, in the morning we commended each other to the grace of GOD, and went on our several ways.

We breakfasted at *Erfurt* with Mr. *Reinhart*, spent the evening with some brethren at *Saxegotha*, and by long journeys came to *Marienborn* on Friday August 25.

Monday 28. I took my leave of the countess (the count being gone to *Fena*) and setting out early the next morning came about three in the afternoon to *Frankfort*. From Mr. *Böhler's* we went to the society, where one of the brethren from *Marienborn* offered free redemption through the blood of Christ to sixty or seventy persons.

Wednesday 30. In the afternoon we came to *Mentz*, and agreed for our passage to *Colen* by water; for a florin per head; which was but half what we gave before, tho' (it seems) twice as much as we ought to have given.

Thursday 31. We spent half an hour in the great church, a huge heap of irregular buildings; full of altars, adorned (or loaded rather) with abundance of gold and silver. In going out, we observed a paper on the door, which was of so extraordinary a nature, that I thought it would not be labour lost to transcribe it. The words were as follow:

*Vollkommener ablass für die arme seelen in feg-feur.*

“ Seine päbliche heiligkeit, *Clemens* der 12te, haben in  
 “ diesem jahr 1738, den 7 Augusti, die pfarr kirche des Sancti  
 “ *Christophori*, in *Mentz* gnädigsten privilegirt, dafs ein jeder  
 “ priester, so wohl secular als regularischen stands, der am  
 “ aller seelen-tag, wie auch an einim jedem tag in derselben  
 “ octav; so dann am zweien vom ordinario tägen einer jeden  
 “ woch das jahr hindurch, für die seel eine christglaubigen  
 “ verstorbenen an zum altar mess lesen wird, jedesmal eine  
 “ seel aus dem feg-feur erlösen könne.

A full release for the poor souls in purgatory.

His papal holiness, *Clement the XIIth*, hath this year 1738, on the seventh of August, most graciously privileged the cathedral

*cathedral church of St. Christopher in Mentz, so that every priest, as well secular as regular, who will read mass at an altar for the soul of a christian departed, on any holiday, or on any day within the octave thereof, or two extraordinary days, to be appointed by the ordinary, of any week in the year, may each time deliver a soul out of purgatory.*

Now I desire to know, whether any *Romanist* of common sense, can either defend or approve of this?

At eight we took boat, and on *Saturday Sept. 2*, about eleven came to *Colen*; which we left at one, and between seven and eight reached a village, an hour short of *Neus*. Here we overtook a large number of *Switzers*, men, women and children, singing, dancing and making merry, being all going to make their fortunes in *Georgia*. Looking upon them as delivered into my hands by GOD, I plainly told them what manner of place it was. If they now leap into the fire with open eyes, their blood is on their own head.

*Monday, 4*. Before noon we came to *Cleve*, and to *Nimwegen* in the evening. The next night we lay at a little village near *Tiel*; which leaving early in the morning, we walked by the side of many pleasant orchards, and in the afternoon came to *Yffelsstein*. We stayed only one night with the brethren, (in the new house, called *Herndyke*, an *English* mile from the town) and hasting forward came the next afternoon to *Dr. Koker's at Rotterdam*.

I cannot but acknowledge the civility of this friendly man, all the time we stayed in his house. In the morning, *Friday 8*, we went to the *English* episcopal church, which is a large, handsome, convenient building. The minister read prayers seriously and distinctly, to a small, well-behaved congregation. Being informed our ship was to sail the next day, (*Saturday*) we took leave of our generous friend, and went to an inn close to the key, that we might be ready when called to go aboard. Having waited till past four in the afternoon, we stepped into the *Jews' synagogue*, which lies near the water-side. I do not wonder that so many *Jews*, (especially those who have any reflection) utterly abjure all religion. My spirit was moved within me, at that horrid



horrid, senseless pageantry, that mockery of GOD, which they called public worship. Lord, do not thou yet cast off thy people! But in Abraham's seed let them also be blessed!

The ship lingering still, I had time to exhort several English, whom we met with at our inn, to pursue inward religion; the renewal of their souls in righteousness and true holiness. In the morning a daughter of affliction came to see me, who teaches a school at Rotterdam. She had been for some time under deep convictions; but could find none to instruct or comfort her. After much conversation, we joined in prayer, and her spirit a little revived. Between nine and ten we went on board. In the afternoon I read prayers, and preached in the great cabin. The wind being contrary, we did not get out of the river till Wednesday; nor to London till Saturday night.

[Continued to Page 70.]

## A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

REV. JOHN FLETCHER.

By the Rev. JOHN WESLEY.

SEQUOR, NON PASSIBUS ÆQUIS.

To the R E A D E R.

NO man in England has had so long an acquaintance with Mr. Fletcher as myself. Our acquaintance began almost as soon as his arrival in London, about the year 1752, before he entered into holy orders, or (I believe) had any such intention. And it continued uninterrupted between thirty and forty years, even till it pleased GOD to take

take him to himself. Nor was ours a slight or ordinary acquaintance; but we were of one heart and of one soul. We had no secrets between us for many years; we did not purposely hide any thing from each other. From time to time he consulted me, and I him, on the most important occasions. And he constantly professed, not only much esteem, but (what I valued far more) much affection. He told me in one of his letters, (I doubt not from his heart)

*"Tecum vivere amem; tecum obeam lubens;*

*"With thee I gladly would both live and die."*

I therefore think myself obliged by the strongest ties, to pay this small tribute to his memory. But you may easily observe, that in doing this, I am little more than a compiler. For I owe a great, if not the greatest part of the ensuing tract, to a few friends, who have been at no small pains, in furnishing me with materials; and above all, to my dear friend, (such she has been almost from her childhood) Mrs. Fletcher. I could easily have altered both hers and their language, while I retained their sentiments. But I was conscious, I could not alter it for the better: and I would not alter it for altering sake; but judged it fairest to give you most of their accounts, very nearly in their own words.

AMSTERDAM,

September 12, 1786.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

C H A P. I.

*Of his Parentage and Youth.*

1. **J**OHN William de la Flechere (this was properly his name) was born at Nyon in Switzerland, a town about fifteen miles north of Geneva, on September the twelfth, in the year 1729. His father was an officer in the French service, 'till he left the army in order to marry. But af-

ter



ter a time he returned to the army, and was a colonel in the militia of his own country.

2. In his early childhood he had much of the fear of GOD, and great tenderness of conscience. One day, having offended his father, who threatened to correct him, he did not dare to come into his presence, but retired into the garden: and when he saw him coming towards him, he ran away with all speed. But he was presently struck with deep remorse, and said to himself, "What! Do I run away from my father? Perhaps I shall live to have a son, that will run away from *me*!" And it was several years before the impression, which he then received, was worn off.

3. Another instance of his tenderness of conscience occurred, when he was about seven years of age. He was one day reproved by the nursery-maid, saying, "You are a naughty boy. Do you not know that the devil is to take away all naughty children?" He was no sooner in bed, than he began to reflect very deeply upon her words. He thought, "*I am* a naughty boy. And how do I know, but GOD may let the devil take me away this night?" He then got up and wrestled with GOD in prayer, for a considerable time. And he would not go to bed again, till he believed GOD had forgiven him.

4. The following accounts Mr. *Fletcher* himself gave to Mr. *Samuel Webb*, of London, then residing at *Madely*.

"When I was a lad, I had a design to get some fruit out of my father's garden. The door being locked, I could not get in, but by climbing over the wall. This was very high; but with some difficulty, I got to the top of it. As I was walking upon it, my foot slipped, and I fell down to the bottom. But just where I fell, a large quantity of fresh-made mortar was laid. I fell exactly upon it. This broke my fall, or it might have cost me my life."

5. "Once as I was swimming by myself in a deep water, one end of a strong ribband which bound my hair, getting loose I know not how, and twisting about my leg, tied me as it were neck and heels. I strove with all my strength to disengage myself: but it was to no purpose.

No person being within call, I gave myself up for lost. But when I had given over struggling, the ribband loosed of itself."

6. "Another instance of the tender care which GOD had over me was as follows. One evening I and four young gentlemen in high spirits, made a solemn agreement with each other, to swim the next day to a rocky island, five miles distant from the shore. But this foolish adventure was within a very little of costing us all our lives. I and another indeed did with great difficulty and hazard swim to the island. But when we came thither, the rock was so steep and smooth, that we could not possibly climb up. After swimming round several times, and making many ineffectual efforts, we thought we must perish there. But at length one of us found a place, where he made a shift to crawl up. He then helped his companion after him; the others swam about half way. A boat then took them up, when they were just sinking. Another boat, which we had ordered to follow us, afterwards came and took us home."

7. A still more remarkable deliverance it is, of which he gave an account in the year 1760. "Some years since I lived at a place very near the river *Rhine*. In that part, it is broader than the *Thames* at *London-bridge*, and extremely rapid. But having been long practised in swimming, I made no scruple of going into it at any time. Only I was always careful to keep near the shore, that the stream might not carry me away. Once, however, being less careful than usual, I was unawares drawn into the mid channel. The water there was extremely rough, and poured along like a galloping horse. I endeavoured to swim against it, but in vain, till I was hurried far from home. When I was almost spent, I rested upon my back, and then looked about for a landing place, finding I must either land or sink. With much difficulty I got near the shore. But the rocks were so ragged and sharp, that I saw, if I attempted to land there, I should be torn in pieces. So I was constrained to turn again to the mid stream: at last, despairing of life, I was cheered by the sight of a fine smooth creek, into which I was swiftly carried by a violent stream. A building stood directly



directly across it, which I did not then know to be a powder-mill. The last thing I can remember was, the striking of my breast against one of the piles whereon it stood. I then lost my senses, and knew nothing more, till I rose on the other side of the mill. When I came to myself, I was in a calm, safe place, perfectly well, without any soreness or weariness at all. Nothing was amiss but the distance of my clothes, the stream having driven me five miles from the place where I left them. Many persons gladly welcomed me on shore: one gentleman in particular, who said, "I looked, when you went under the mill, and again when you rose on the other side. And the time of your being immersed among the piles, was exactly twenty minutes."

But some will say, "Why this was a miracle!" Undoubtedly it was. It was not a natural event; but a work wrought above the power of nature, probably by the ministry of angels.

8. When he was yet very young, his father sent him to the university of *Geneva*. After he had gone through the usual course of study, it was the desire of his parents, that he should be a clergyman. But it was his own desire and resolution, to be an officer in the army. Not being able to gain their consent to this, he, without their consent, went away to *Lisbon*. Here he gathered a company of his own countrymen, accepted of a captain's commission, and engaged to serve the king of *Portugal*, on board a man of war, which was just then getting ready with all speed, in order to sail to *Brazil*. He then wrote to his parents, begging them to send him a considerable sum of money. Of this he expected to make a vast advantage. But they refused him roughly: unmoved by this he determined to go without it, as soon as the ship sailed. But in the morning, the maid waiting on him at breakfast, let the tea-kettle fall, and so scalded his leg, that he kept his bed for a considerable time after. During that time, the ship sailed for *Brazil*. But it was observed that ship was heard of no more.

9. But how is this reconcileable with the account which has been given of his piety when he was a child? Very easily:

easily: it only shews, that his piety declined while he was at the university. (And this is too often the case of other youths in our own universities.) But it pleased GOD at or before his journey to *England*, to lift up his head again.

10. His desire of being an officer in the army continued after he returned from *Lisbon*. And when he was informed that his uncle, then a colonel in the *Dutch* service, had procured a commission for him, he joyfully set out for *Flanders*. But just at that time the peace was concluded; and his uncle dying quickly after, his hopes were blasted, and he gave up all thoughts of going into the army. And being disengaged from all business, he thought it would not be amiss, to spend a little time in *England*.

11. Coming to the custom-house in *London*, with some other young gentlemen, none of them could speak any *English*, they were treated with the utmost furliness and ill-manners, by some brutish custom-house officers. These not only took out, and jumbled together, all the things that were in their portmanteaus; but took away their letters of recommendation: telling them, "All letters must be sent by the post." They are such saucy and ill-mannered wretches as these that bring up an evil report on our nation. *Britons* might well be stiled *hospitibus feri*, if they were all like these vermin.

12. From hence they went to an inn; but here they were under another difficulty. As they spoke no *English*, they could not tell how to exchange their foreign, into *English* money: till Mr. *Fletcher*, going to the door, heard a well-drest Jew talking *French*. He told him the difficulty they were under, with regard to the exchange of money. The Jew replied, "Give me your money, and I will get it changed in five minutes." Mr. *Fletcher* without delay gave him his purse, in which were ninety pounds. As soon as he came back to his company, he told them what he had done. They all cried out with one voice, "then your money is gone. You need never expect to see a crown or a doit of it any more. Men are constantly waiting about the doors of these inns, on purpose to take in young strangers."



Seeing no remedy, no way to help himself, he could only commend his cause to GOD. And that was enough. Before they had done breakfast, in came the Jew, and brought him the whole money.

13. Inquiring for a person who was proper to perfect him in the *English* tongue, (the rudiments of which he had begun to learn before he left *Geneva*) he was recommended to Mr. *Burchell*, who then kept a boarding school, at *South-Nimms* in *Hertfordshire*. And when Mr. *Burchell* removed to *Hatfield*, he chose to remove with him: All the time he was both at *South-Nimms* and at *Hatfield*, he was of a serious and reserved behaviour; very different from that of the other young gentlemen, who were his fellow students. Here he diligently studied both the *English* language, and all the branches of polite literature: Mean time his easy and genteel behaviour, together with his eminent sweetness of temper, gained him the esteem as well as the affection, of all that conversed with him. He frequently visited some of the first families in *Hatfield*, who were all fond of his conversation: so lively and ingenious at the same time, evidencing both the gentleman and the scholar. All this time he had the fear of GOD deeply rooted in his heart. But he had none to take him by the hand, and lead him forward in the ways of GOD. He staid with Mr. *Burchell* about eighteen months, who loved him as his own son.

14. Afterwards one Mr. *Dechamps*, a *French* minister, to whom he had been recommended, procured him the place of tutor to the two sons of *Thomas Hill*, Esquire, at *Tern-Hall*, in *Shropshire*. In the year 1752, he removed into Mr. *Hill*'s family, and entered upon the important province of instructing the young gentlemen. He still feared GOD, but had not yet an experimental sense of his love. Nor was he convinced of his own fallen state, till one Sunday evening, a servant came in to make up his fire, while he was writing some music, who looking at him with serious concern, said, "Sir, I am sorry to see you so employed on the Lord's-day." At first his pride was alarmed, and his resentment moved

moved at being reproved by a servant. But upon reflection, he felt the reproof was just. He immediately put away his music, and from that very hour, became a strict observer of the Lord's-day.

15. I have heard two very different accounts of the manner wherein he had the first notice of the people called *Methodists*. But I think it reasonable to prefer to any other, that which I received from his own mouth. This was as follows :

When Mr. *Hill* went up to *London* to attend the parliament, he took his family and Mr. *Fletcher* with him. While they stopped at *St. Albans*, he walked out into the town, and did not return till they were set out for *London*. A horse being left for him, he rode after, and overtook them in the evening. Mr. *Hill* asking him, why he stayed behind? He said, "As I was walking, I met with a poor old woman, who talked so sweetly of Jesus Christ, that I knew not how the time passed away." I shall wonder, said Mrs. *H.* if our tutor does not turn *Methodist* by and by. "*Methodist*, Madam, said he, pray what is that?" She replied, "Why, the *Methodists* are a people that do nothing but pray: they are praying all day and all night." "Are they?" said he, "then by the help of GOD, I will find them out, if they be above ground." He did find them out not long after, and was admitted into the society. And from this time, whenever he was in town, he met in Mr. *Richard Edwards's* class. This he found so profitable to his soul, that he lost no opportunity of meeting. And he retained a peculiar regard for Mr. *Edwards* till the day of his death,

## CHAP II.

### *Of his Conversion to GOD.*

1. **I**T will be most satisfactory to the serious reader, to give an account of this in his own words. They run thus. "The twelfth of January, in the year 1755, I received the sacrament of the Lord's supper, though my heart



heart was as hard as a stone. The following day I felt the tyranny of sin more than ever, and an uncommon coldness in all religious duties. I felt the burden of my corruptions heavier than ever: there was no rest in my flesh. I called upon the Lord; but with such heaviness, as made me fear it was lost labour. Many a time did I take up the bible to seek comfort; but not being able to read, I shut it again. The thoughts which engrossed my mind were these. I am undone. I have wandered from GOD more than ever. I have trampled under-foot the frequent convictions which GOD has wrought in my heart. Instead of going strait to Christ, I have wasted my time, in fighting against sin, by the sole use of the means of grace: as if the means would do me good, without the blessing of GOD. I never had faith: and without faith it is impossible to please GOD. Therefore all my thoughts, words, and works, however specious before men, are utterly sinful before GOD. And if I am not changed before I go hence, I am lost to all eternity.

2. When I saw that all my endeavours availed nothing against my conquering sin, I almost gave up all hope, and resolved to sin on and go to hell. Yet I had a strange thought, "If I do go to hell, I will praise GOD there. And since I cannot be a monument of his mercy in heaven, I will be a monument of his justice in hell." But I soon recovered my ground. I thought, Christ died for all. Therefore he died for *me*. He died to pluck such sinners as I am out of the devil's teeth. And as I sincerely desire to be his, he will surely take me to himself. He will surely let me know before I die, that he has died for *me*. If he leaves me for awhile in this dreadful state, it is only to shew me the depth he draws me out of. But then I thought, perhaps he will do it only at my dying hour. And must I sin on till then? How can I endure this? But I thought again, my Saviour was above three and thirty years on earth. Let me wait for him as many years, and then I may have some excuse for my impatience. Does GOD owe me any thing? Is he bound to time or place? Do I deserve any thing

thing at his hands but damnation? Yet anger was always one of the sins which I could not overcome. I went on sinning and repenting, and sinning again: but still calling on GOD's mercy through Christ.

3. I was now beat out of all my strong holds. I felt my helplessness; and lay at the feet of Christ. I cried, "Save me, Lord, as a brand plucked out of the fire! Give me justifying faith: for the devil will surely reign over me, till thou takest me into thy hand. I shall only be an instrument in his hand to work wickedness, till thou stretch out thy almighty hand, and save thy lost creature, by free, unmerited grace." I seldom went to private prayer, but this thought came into my mind, this may be the happy hour, when thou wilt prevail with GOD! But still I was disappointed. I cried to GOD: but my heart did not go with my lips. I prayed, but often could hardly keep awake. When overcome with heaviness, I went to bed: beseeching GOD to spare me till the next day, that I might renew my wrestling with him, till I should prevail.

4. On Sunday the nineteenth in the evening, I heard an excellent sermon on these words: *Being justified by faith, we have peace with GOD, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* I heard it attentively, but my heart was not moved. I was only still more convinced, that I was an unbeliever, and that till I had faith, I should never have peace. The hymn after sermon suited the subject: but I could not join in singing it. So I sat mourning while others rejoiced. I went home, still resolving to wrestle with the Lord like Jacob, till I should become a prevailing Israel.

5. I begged of GOD the following day, to shew me the wickedness of my heart. I besought him to increase my convictions; for I was afraid I did not mourn enough for my sins. But I found relief in Mr. *Wesley's* journal, where I learned, that we should not build on what we feel, but go to Christ with all our sins, and all our hardness of heart. On the twenty-first I wrote down part of what filled my heart, namely, a confession of my sins, misery, and helplessness, together with a resolution to seek Christ even unto death.



death. In the evening I read the scriptures, and found a sort of pleasure, in seeing a picture of my own wickedness exactly drawn in the third of the *Romans*, and that of my present condition in the seventh. I often wished to be acquainted with somebody, who had been in my condition, and resolved to seek for one, to whom I might unbosom my whole soul. On Thursday Satan beset me hard: I sinned, and grievously too. And now I almost gave up all hope: I was on the brink of despair: and nevertheless continued to fall into sin, as often as I had temptation. But I must observe, that though I frequently thought, hell would be my portion, yet I never was much afraid of it: whether this was owing to a secret hope, or to hardness of heart, I know not. But I was continually crying out, What stupidity! I see myself hanging over hell, as it were by a single thread! And yet I am not afraid, but sin on! O what is man without the grace of GOD! A very devil in wickedness, though inferior to him in power! In the evening I went to a sincere friend, and told him something of my state. He endeavoured to administer comfort. But it was not suited to my state. When we parted he gave me some advice, which was better suited to my condition. "GOD, said he, is merciful. GOD loves you, and if he denies you any thing, it is for your good. You deserve nothing at his hands; but wait patiently for him, and never give up your hope." I went home, resolved to follow his advice, though I should stay till death.

6. I proposed to receive the Lord's supper on the following Sunday. I therefore returned to my room, and looked out a sacramental hymn. I learned it by heart, and prayed it over many times, intending to repeat it at the table. Then I went to bed, with rather more hope and peace than I had felt for some time. But Satan waked, though I slept. I dreamed I had committed a grievous and abominable sin. I awaked amazed and confounded, but fell upon my knees and prayed with more faith than usual: and afterwards went about my business with an uncommon cheerfulness. It was not long before I was tempted by my besetting sin: but I found

it had no power. My soul was not even ruffled. I took no notice of this at first. But having withstood the temptation again and again, I perceived it was the Lord's doing. Afterwards it was suggested, It is presumption for such a sinner, to hope for so great a mercy. I prayed, that I might not be in a delusion; and the more I prayed, the more clearly I saw it was real. For though sin stirred all the day long, I always overcame it in the name of the Lord.

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*A short ACCOUNT of the*  
 CONVERSION and DEATH of  
 CASTER GARRET,

*In a LETTER to a FRIEND.*

**C**ASTER GARRET was born in *Ireland*, of protestant parents, and lived without GOD in the world till the 55<sup>th</sup> year of his age. About that time, being afflicted, he was greatly alarmed on account of his sins: but when he recovered, this conviction wore off, on which he grew careless again. Shortly after, it pleased GOD to lay his hands on a neighbour of his, who was a very wicked young man. This sickness was so sanctified to him, that when he recovered, he evidenced that a real change was wrought upon him. Presently after, a prayer-meeting being appointed at his house many came to it, and among the rest, *Caster Garret*. He had not attended long, before he was awakened again to a sense of his danger. On seeing the house, where we met, too small, he offered us the use of his barn to meet in.

After some time, the Lord afflicted him again. Now finding himself exceedingly ill, his sins were set in array before him. On this, he sent for me to pray with him. When I came, I asked him if he saw that he stood in need of a Saviour? He answered, "Yes, yes!" I then asked, do you see the necessity of being born again? He answered,



ed, "I know I deserve hell; and added, O pray that Christ may have mercy on me, and reveal himself in my soul." On hearing this, I urged him to pray for himself, and to expect the pardon of all his sins: telling him that when he was justified, he would find peace with GOD, through our Lord Jesus Christ. I then left him earnestly crying for mercy. When I visited him again, though he seemed better in body, yet he continued to cry out for the salvation of his soul.

Nov. 18, 1785, his disorder increasing, he sent for me again. When I came, he took me by the hand, and said, "GOD is love! O help me to praise him."

After prayer he rejoiced exceedingly, and said, "Christ has done great things for me! I have given up wife and friends! I am crucified to the world, and the fear of death is quite gone."

He then sent for his friends and neighbours, and charged them to forsake their sins, and turn to GOD: adding, "If you do, he will have mercy on you." To one whom he knew to be a sabbath-breaker, he said, "You have often grieved me by breaking the sabbath of the Lord: I charge you to quit your sins, and to cry to GOD for mercy; or else where I am going, you will never come." In short; he preached Christ to all who came near him, and exhorted them speedily to turn from all their sins.

Thus he continued for two days. When I returned, on finding he was still happy in GOD, we sung the following hymn:

O the infinite cares,  
Temptations and snares,  
His hand hath conducted me through:  
O the blessing bestow'd,  
By a bountiful GOD!  
And the mercies eternally new.

A friend coming into the room, he spoke to him in a very comfortable manner: and then said, "blessed be GOD who sends his children from different places to see me!"

Another

Another coming to see him, who spoke very comfortably, he asked him, "what think you of Christ?" On my saying,

"My Jesus to know, and feel his blood flow,  
'Tis life everlasting, 'tis heaven below,"

he answered, "O Jesus, did every creature enjoy as much happiness as I do at the present, it would be a happy world indeed: it would be just such a world as it ought to be! O what a pity it is that every creature does not love Jesus!"

On my saying, look to GOD for an entire change of heart, he answered, "I will;" and immediately added, "O Jesus, as thou hast in great mercy justified me freely, I beseech thee sanctify me wholly!"

The next night he sent for me again. When I came, he said, "O *John*, stay with me this night! I shall soon go home!" But, said I, do you think you are ready? He answered, "Jesus can soon make me ready." He then desired his brother's wife to read him a rejoicing hymn.

Presently after satan made his last effort against him. For all on a sudden he cried out aloud, "I am undone! undone! I have lost my way! the Lord is departed from me! O, it was all lies I was telling! GOD has shewed me that I am a great sinner! I see my sins before me, as a mighty army ready to devour me! O my GOD, I am undone, undone!" I then said, fear not! it is the enemy who wants to destroy your confidence, and to remove you from the rock of your salvation. But stronger is he that is for you, than all that are against you! He answered, "I hope so;" but yet continued in great distress. On my mentioning those words, if we confess our sins, GOD is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; he answered, "GOD is faithful and just! He is come! Help me up! Blessed be GOD! He is come!" Then giving a stamp with his foot; he said, "Satan! I stamp thee under my feet! O my dear friends and neighbours, praise, praise the Lord with me! For he is come in mercy to my soul! The terror is gone! The sting of death is gone!



O death, where is thy sting ! O grave, where is thy victory !  
Blessed be Jesus who hath given me the victory ! O, I feel  
his love in my heart !”

“ Praise GOD from whom all blessings flow !”

The exceeding great joy he felt in his soul, gave vigour  
to his body also. For, before this deliverance, he could  
scarce bear to be turned in the bed : but now he could sit  
up himself, without any help ; yea, we all thought he could  
walk over the room !

A boy seeing this mighty change, ran home to his mother,  
and said, mother get up ; for my uncle will soon be  
well ! I never saw such a change before ! I think he can  
walk over the room ! On hearing this, she came, and was  
astonished at what she saw and heard.

His wife coming into the room, praised the Lord for  
what he had done for him ! She then said, my dear husband,  
I am willing to part with you ; for you are GOD's and not  
mine. I freely give you up to him. Farewell, my dear  
husband ! O that my last end may be like yours ! To which  
he answered, “ O that it may !”

“ Our mourning is all at an end,

“ When rais'd by the life-giving word.”

He just said, “ I am happy !” and then he fell asleep in the  
arms of Jesus.

*November 27, 1785.*

## Poetry.

A LETTER to a PERSON in high Life.

Matthew vi. 19.

*Lay not up for yourselves Treasures on Earth, &c.*

**W**HY do you set your heart on earth,  
Or plume yourself on wealth or birth?

What

What bliss can these afford?  
Will they prolong your fleeting breath?  
Or rescue from the jaws of death  
Their supercilious Lord?

Do not the rich, as well as poor,  
Find death still knocking at their door?  
Or does he less invade  
The lofty castles of the great,  
Shining in all the pomp of state,  
Than poverty's low shed?

Remember then how soon you must  
Yield unto death, and in the dust  
Your empty honours lay:  
Your years with swift, though silent pace,  
Slide on, nor linger in the race,  
To bring th' unwelcome day.

Then nought on earth you call your own,  
Will follow you to worlds unknown;  
Your every dear delight,  
Your house, your land, your pleasing wife,  
And all the comforts of this life,  
Will vanish out of sight.

Not one of all those spreading trees,  
Planted by you to catch the breeze,  
And form the cooling shade;  
Their short-liv'd master will pursue,  
Except the cypress be your due,  
To death once sacred made.

Nor wealth, nor birth, relief in hell  
Can yield, where lordly Dives fell,  
Involv'd in torments dire;  
Of all his vast, his boundless store,  
No mite is left him, to procure  
One drop to quench the fire.

Hear



Hear him deplore his hapless fate,  
 He cries for mercy, now too late;  
 To Abraham tells his grief:  
 "Have pity, father, on thy son,  
 On me bestow one little boon,  
 To give me some relief!

The favour which I ask of thee  
 Is this, send Laz'rus unto me,  
 Who am with torment stung;  
 That he into the cooling stream  
 May dip his finger, damp the flame  
 That preys upon my tongue."

That such may never be your end,  
 By this be warn'd, in time, my friend,  
 This mammon-god despise;  
 But make the living Lord your stay,  
 That when this world shall fail, you may  
 Have treasures in the skies.



2 KINGS ii. 11. *And parted them both asunder.*

**T**HAT chariot, in my life's short day,  
 I oft have seen descend,  
 To tear my other self away,  
 To part me from my friend.  
 But lo, it comes my soul t' unite  
 With those that went before,  
 It whirls me to my friends in light,  
 Where we shall part no more.

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THE

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GOD's LOVE TO MANKIND. *Manifested by disproving  
his Absolute Decree for their Damnation.*

[Continued from Vol. I. page 569.]

**T**HIRDLY, Absolute Reprobation is contrary to the use and end of GOD's gifts bestowed upon men, which gifts are of two sorts :

1. Gifts of *nature*, our creation, preservation, together with health, strength, beauty, and wisdom.

2. Gifts of *grace*, which have a more immediate relation to everlasting life, and are means either of purchasing salvation or of applying it.

Means of purchasing it, are, the coming of Christ into the world, and the sacrificing himself on the cross.

Means of applying it, are the ministry of the word, and sacraments, the long-suffering of GOD, the enlightening of men's understandings, and the plantation of many excellent virtues in their hearts.

Now of these endowments of nature and grace, what the true use and end is, the scripture doth plainly and particularly shew.

First, for the gifts of *nature*, they are bestowed upon all that have them, for the encouraging and enabling of them to serve GOD and save their souls. For *Acts* xiv. 16, 17: the apostle saith, that God (even in those times in which he suffered



suffered the gentiles to walk in their own ways, and withheld from them the light of his holy word) did give unto the people of the world, *rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness*; and in so doing he left not himself among them *without witness*. This implieth, that he gave them these good things, that he might make himself known unto them, and so draw them to glorify him according to the knowledge which they had of him.

*Acts* xvii. 26, 27, the apostle saith directly, that men are made and placed in this world, and appointed to their several times and dwellings, *that they might seek and find GOD*: that is, that they might serve him and save their souls. For what is it to seek GOD, but to serve him? and what is it to find GOD, but to enjoy his face and favour here and in heaven? So *Prosper*: “Look of what use the law and “the prophets were to the *Israelites*; of the same use were the “gifts of creation and providence to the gentiles.” GOD never intended to deal with the gentiles, as the foul-mouth’d *Manichees* said he dealt with the Jews; to feed and fat them up with outward blessings, as so many swine with husks and acorns, but to draw them up by these to an expectation of better things, and a careful endeavour to please GOD, that so they might obtain them.

The end of all creatures, and of all created gifts bestowed upon man, is subordinate to the end of man. Man’s end is to glorify GOD upon earth, and enjoy him in heaven; and the end of those gifts is to direct and encourage man to attain that excellent end to which his Creator had appointed him.

The gifts of *grace*, likewise, are given to all that enjoy them, for the same use and end.

For, first, Christ came into the world, not that he might be a rock of offence, at which the greater part of men should stumble and fall; but to shed his blood, and thereby purchase salvation for all mankind; not only for those who are saved, but for those also who through their wilful unbelief and impenitency are not saved; as we may see,

*John*

*John* iii. 17. *GOD sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.* In which words the end of his coming is set down,

1. Negatively ; *not to condemn the world.*

2. Affirmatively ; *but that the world through him might be saved.*

The like speech we have in *John* xii. 47. *I came not to judge the world, but to save it.* These negations joined with affirmations, shew, that the salvation of all men was the only end of Christ's coming ; no other end was properly intended by it but this. *The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost,* *Luke* xix. 10. Therefore he came to save every man ; for every man was lost. And *Acts* iii. 26. *To you, saith St. Peter, hath GOD sent his Son Jesus, to bless you, in turning every one of you from your iniquities. Every one of you—you that reject him, as well as you that receive him.* The end, then, of Christ's coming into the world, was the salvation of all and every man therein.

2. The ministry of the word and sacraments is given also for the same end, and is, in its proper use, an instrument of conveying the spirit of regeneration to those that live under it, and to all those.

Better proofs for this I cannot have, than those which our reverend divines at *Dort* gathered to my hand. *Isa.* lix. 21. *This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord : My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, or seed's seed, for ever.* From these words it appeareth, that the word and Spirit are joined in the ministry of the word with an inseparable band, by the promise of GOD. Hence it is that the ministers of the New Testament are called, *ministers, not of the letter, but of the Spirit ; not of the letter that killeth, but of the Spirit that giveth life,* *2 Cor.* iii. 6. And the ministry of the gospel is called, *the ministry of the Spirit,* in the same place, ver. 8. Hence also is the gospel called, *grace that bringeth*  
*salvation,*



*salvation*, Tit. ii. 11. and the word of reconciliation, 2 Cor. v. 19.

To these let me add, 1 Pet. i. 23. where the word is called *the seed of the new birth*: and 2 Cor. v. 20. where ministers are called *embassadors for Christ, to beseech men to be reconciled to GOD*. They are so called to shew, that the word preached is, by GOD's appointment, an instrument to make men new creatures; and that the proper matter of ministers' errands is, reconciliation with GOD; and the natural fruit of it is, in GOD's intent, not the obduration and destruction, but the conversion and salvation of men. The same authors, out of John xv. 22. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they should not have had sin*, do say it is evident, that Christ in his preaching did administer so much inward grace as was sufficient to convince those that rejected the gospel, of positive unbelief, and render them obnoxious to just punishment: and, by good consequence, so much as sufficed, by their good husbandry, to have converted and saved them: for *that grace leaveth none without excuse, which is not sufficient to convert them*.

I will conclude what they say of this gracious intention of GOD in the ministry of the word, with that speech of *Prosper*, cited by them: "They that say, that all those to whom the gospel is preached, even those that obey not the gospel, are not called to grace, they say an untruth." *GOD looked for grapes*, says the text, Isa. v. 2. What doth this imply, but that it was GOD's principal aim, in the husbandry which he bestowed upon the church of Israel, that it should bring forth good fruit, though in the event it did not? *How often would I have gathered you?* saith Christ to Jerusalem, Matt. xxiii. 37. *These things have I spoken, that ye might be saved: but ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life*, John v. 34. 40. In those words intimating no less than this, that it was his full intent, by his preaching, to gather and to save those very men, that in the end were not gathered nor saved, through their contempt or neglect of his ministry.

A SERMON

[Continued to Page 105.]

## S E R M O N XIV.

On I PETER iii. 3, 4.

*Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of—wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel.*

*But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of GOD of great price.*

I. **S**T. Paul exhorts all those who desire to be transformed by the renewal of their minds, and to prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD, Not to be conformed to this world. Indeed this exhortation relates more directly to the wisdom of the world, which in all its branches is foolishness with GOD; and to the spirit of the world, which is totally opposite to his good, and acceptable, and perfect will. But it likewise has a reference, even to the manners and customs of the world, which naturally flow from its wisdom and spirit, and are exactly suitable thereto. And it was not beneath the wisdom of GOD, to give us punctual directions in this respect also.

2. Some of these, particularly that in the text, descend even to the apparel of Christians. And both this text and the parallel one of St. Paul, are as express as possible. St. Paul's words are [1 Tim. ii. 9, 10.] *I will, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel; not—with gold, or pearls, or costly array: but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*

3. But is it not strange, say some, that the all-wise Spirit of GOD should condescend to take notice of such trifles as these? To take notice of such insignificant trifles? Things of so little moment? Or rather of none at all? For what does it signify, provided we take care of the Soul, what the Body is covered with? Whether in silk or sackcloth? What harm can there be, in the wearing of gold, or silver, or precious stones? Or any other of those beautiful things, with which GOD has so amply provided us? May we not apply to this,



what St. *Paul* has observed on another occasion, That *every creature of GOD is good, and nothing to be rejected?*

4. It is certain that many who sincerely fear GOD, have cordially embraced this opinion. And their practice is suitable thereto: they make no scruple of conformity to the world, by putting on, as often as occasion offers, either gold, or pearls, or costly apparel. And indeed they are not well pleased with those who think it their duty to reject them: the using of which they apprehend to be one branch of Christian liberty. Yea, some have gone considerably farther: even so far, as to make it a point, to bring those who had refrained from them for some time, to make use of them again: assuring them, that it was mere superstition to think there was any harm in them. Nay, farther still, a very respectable person has said in express terms, “I do not desire that any who *dress plain*, should be in our Society.” It is therefore certainly worth our while, to consider this matter thoroughly: seriously to enquire, Whether there is any harm in the putting on of gold, or jewels, or costly apparel?

5. But before we enter on the subject, let it be observed, That slovenliness is no part of Religion: that neither this, nor any text of Scripture, condemns neatness of apparel: certainly this is a Duty, not a sin: “Cleanliness is indeed next to Godliness.” Agreeably to this, good Mr. *Herbert* advises every one that fears GOD,

“ Let thy mind’s sweetness have its operation  
Upon thy person, clothes, and habitation.”

And surely every one should attend to this, if he would not have the good that is in him, evil spoken of.

6. Another mistake with regard to apparel, has been common in the religious world. It has been supposed by some, that there ought to be no difference at all in the apparel of Christians. But neither these texts, nor any other in the Book of GOD, teach any such thing, or direct that the dress of the Master or Mistress should be nothing different from that of their servants. There may undoubtedly be a mode-

rate

rate difference of apparel, between persons of different stations. And where the eye is single, this will easily be adjusted by the rules of Christian Prudence.

7. What is then the meaning of these Scriptures? What is it which they forbid? They manifestly forbid ordinary Christians, those in the lower or middle ranks of life, to be adorned with gold, or pearls, or costly apparel. But why? What harm is there herein? This deserves our serious consideration. But it is highly expedient, or rather absolutely necessary for all who would consider it to any purpose, as far as is possible, to divest themselves of all prejudice, and to stand open to conviction: is it not necessary likewise in the highest degree, that they should earnestly beseech the Father of lights, that “by his holy inspiration they may think the things that are right, and by his merciful guidance perform the same?” Then they will not say, no, not in their hearts (as I fear too many have done) what the famous Jew said to the Christian, *Non persuadebis, etiamsi persuaseris*, “Thou shalt not persuade me, though thou hast persuaded me.”

8. The question is, What harm does it do, to adorn ourselves with gold, or pearls, or costly array, suppose we can afford it? That is, suppose it does not hurt or impoverish our families? The first harm it does is, It engenders *Pride*, and where it is already, increases it. Whoever narrowly observes what passes in his own heart, will easily discern this. Nothing is more natural than to think ourselves better, because we are dressed in better clothes. And it is scarce possible for a man to wear costly apparel, without, in some measure, valuing himself upon it. One of the old Heathens was so well apprised of this, that when he had a spite to a poor man, and had a mind to turn his head, he made him a present of a suit of fine clothes.

*Eutrapelus, cuicumq; nocere volebat,  
Vestimenta dabat pretiosa. \**

He

\* *Eutrapelus* made presents of splendid garments to those, whom he wished to hurt or corrupt.



He could not then but imagine himself to be as much better, as he was finer than his neighbour. And how many thousands, not only Lords and Gentlemen in *England*, but honest Tradesmen, argue the same way? Inferring the superior value of their persons from the value of their clothes?

9. “ But may not one man be as proud though clad in sackcloth, as another is, though clad in cloth of gold?” As this argument meets us at every turn, and is supposed to be unanswerable, it will be worth while to answer it once for all, and to shew the utter emptiness of it. “ May not then one clad in sackcloth, you ask, be as proud, as he that is clad in cloth of gold?” I answer, Certainly he may: I suppose no one doubts of it. And what inference can you draw from this? Take a parallel case. One man that drinks a cup of wholesome wine may be as sick as another that drinks poison. But does this prove that the poison has no more tendency to hurt a man than the wine? Or does it excuse any man for taking, what has a natural tendency to make him sick? Now to apply. Experience shews that fine clothes have a natural tendency to make a man sick of pride. Plain clothes have not. Although it is true, you may be sick of pride in these also, yet they have no natural tendency, either to cause or increase this sickness. Therefore let all that desire to be clothed with Humility, abstain from that poison.

10. Secondly, The wearing gay or costly apparel naturally tends to breed and to increase *Vanity*. By Vanity I here mean the Love and Desire of being admired and praised. Every one of you that is fond of Dress, has a witness of this in your own bosom. Whether you will confess it before man or no, you are convinced of this before GOD. You know in your hearts, it is with a view to be admired that you thus adorn yourselves: and that you would not be at the pains, were none to see you, but GOD and his holy angels. Now the more you indulge this foolish desire, the more it grows upon you. You have vanity enough by nature; but by thus indulging it, you increase it a hundred-fold. O stop! Aim at pleasing GOD alone, and all these Ornaments will drop off.

11. Thirdly,

11. Thirdly, The wearing of gay and costly Apparel, naturally tends to beget *Anger*, and every turbulent and uneasy Passion. And it is on this very account, that the Apostle places this *Outward Adorning* in direct opposition to the *ornament of a meek and quiet spirit*. How remarkably does he add, *Which is in the sight of GOD of great price*:

Than gold and pearls more precious far,  
And brighter than the morning-star.

None can easily conceive, unless himself were to make the sad experiment, the contrariety there is between that *Outward Adorning*, and this *inward quietness of spirit*. You never can thoroughly enjoy this, while you are fond of the other. It is only while you sit loose to that *outward adorning*, that you can *in patience possess your soul*. Then only when you have cast off your fondness for dress, will the peace of GOD reign in your hearts.

12. Fourthly, Gay and costly apparel directly tends to create and inflame Lust. I was in doubt whether to name this brutal appetite: or, in order to spare delicate ears, to express it by some gentle circumlocution: (like the Dean, who some years ago, told his audience at *White-Hall*, “If you do not repent, you will go to a place, which I have too much manners to name before this good company.”) But I think it best to speak out: since the more the word shocks your ears, the more it may arm your heart. The fact is plain and undeniable: it has this effect both on the wearer and the beholder. To the former, our elegant Poet, *Cowley*, addresses those fine lines:

“Th’ adorning thee with so much art  
Is but a barbarous skill:  
’Tis like the poisoning of a dart,  
Too apt before to kill.”

That is (to express the matter in plain terms, without any colouring) “You poison the beholder with far more of this base appetite, than otherwise he would feel.” Did you not



*know*, this would be the natural consequence of your elegant adorning? To push the question home, did you not *desire*, did you not *design* it should? And yet all the time, how did you

“ Set to public view  
A specious face of innocence and virtue?”

Meanwhile you do not yourself escape the snare which you spread for others. The dart recoils, and you are infected with the same poison with which you infected them. You kindle a flame, which at the same time consumes both yourself and your admirers. And it is well, if it does not plunge both you and them into the flames of hell.

13. Fifthly, The wearing costly array is directly opposite to the being *adorned with good works*. Nothing can be more evident than this: for the more you lay out on your own apparel, the less you have left to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to lodge the strangers, to relieve those that are sick and in prison, and to lessen the numberless afflictions to which we are exposed in this vale of tears. And here is no room for the evasion used before, “ I may be as *humble* in cloth of gold, as in sackcloth.” If you could be as *humble*, when you chuse costly, as when you chuse plain apparel (which I flatly deny) yet you could not be as *beneficent*, as plenteous in good works. Every shilling which you save from your own apparel, you may expend in clothing the naked: and in relieving the various necessities of the poor, whom ye *have always with you*. Therefore every shilling which you needlessly spend on your apparel, is in effect stolen from GOD and the poor. And how many precious opportunities of doing good have you defrauded yourself of? How often have you disabled yourself from doing good, by purchasing what you did not want? For what end did you buy these ornaments? To please GOD? No; but to please your own fancy, or to gain the admiration and applause of those that were no wiser than yourself. How much good might you have done with that money? And what an irreparable loss have you sustained by not doing it?

if

if it be true that the day is at hand, when *every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour!*

14. I pray consider this well. Perhaps you have not seen it in this light before. When you are laying out that money in costly apparel, which you could have otherwise spared for the poor, you thereby deprive them of what GOD, the Proprietor of all, had lodged in your hands for their use. If so, what you put upon yourself, you are, in effect, tearing from the back of the naked; as the costly and delicate food which you eat, you are snatching from the mouth of the hungry. For mercy, for pity, for Christ's sake, for the honour of his gospel, stay your hand. Do not throw this money away. Do not lay out on Nothing, yea, worse than Nothing, what may clothe your poor, naked, shivering fellow-creature!

15. Many years ago, when I was at *Oxford*, in a cold winter's day a young maid (one of those we kept at school) called upon me. I said, You seem half starved. Have you nothing to cover you but that thin linen gown? She said, "Sir, this is all I have." I put my hand in my pocket; but found I had scarce any money left, having just paid away what I had. It immediately struck me, Will not thy Master say, "Well done, good and faithful Steward! Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money which might have screened this poor creature from the cold!" O Justice! O Mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid! See thy expensive apparel in the same light: thy Gown, Hat, Head-dress! Every thing about thee which cost more than Christian Duty required thee to lay out, is the blood of the poor! O be wise for the time to come! Be more merciful! More faithful to GOD and man! More abundantly *adorned* (like men and women professing godliness) *with good works*.

16. It is true, great allowance is to be made for those who have never been warned of these things, and perhaps do not know, that there is a word in the Bible, which forbids costly apparel. But what is *That to You?* You have been warned over and over; yea, in the plainest manner possible.



possible. And what have you profited thereby? Do not you still dress just like other people of the same fortune? Is not your Dress, as gay, as expensive as theirs, who never had any such warning? As expensive as it would have been, if you had never heard a word said about it? O how will you answer this, when you and I stand together at the judgment-seat of Christ! Nay, have not many of you grown finer as fast as you have grown richer? As you increased in substance, have you not increased in Dress? Witness the profusion of ribbands, gauze, or linen about your heads! What have you profited then by bearing the reproach of Christ? By being called Methodists? Are you not as fashionably dressed as others of your rank that are no Methodists? Do you ask, "But may we not as well buy fashionable things as unfashionable?" I answer, Not if they give you a bold, immodest look (as those huge hats, bonnets, head-dresses do.) And not if they cost more. "But I can *afford* it." O lay aside for ever that idle, nonsensical word! No Christian can *afford* to waste any part of the substance which GOD has intrusted him with. How long are you to stay here? May not you to-morrow, perhaps to-night, be summoned to arise and go hence, in order to give an account of this and all your talents to the Judge of quick and dead?

17. How then can it be, that after so many warnings, you persist in the same folly? Is it not hence? There are still among you, some that neither profit themselves by all they hear, nor are willing that others should: and these, if any of you are almost persuaded to dress as Christians, reason, and rally, and laugh you out of it. O ye pretty triflers, I intreat you not to do the devil's work any longer! Whatever ye do yourselves, do not harden the hearts of others. And you that are of a better mind, avoid these tempters with all possible care. And if you come where any of them are, either beg them to be silent on the head, or quit the room.

18. Sixthly, The putting on of costly apparel is directly opposite to what the Apostle terms *the hidden man of the heart,*

*heart*, that is, to the whole *image of GOD*, wherein we were created, and which is stamp'd anew upon the heart of every christian believer: opposite to *the mind which was in Christ Jesus*, and the whole nature of inward holiness. All the time you are studying this *outward adorning*, the whole inward work of the Spirit stands still: or rather goes back, though by very gentle, and almost imperceptible degrees. Instead of growing more heavenly-minded, you are more and more earthly-minded. If you once had fellowship with the Father and the Son, it now gradually declines: and you insensibly sink deeper and deeper into the spirit of the world; into foolish and hurtful desires, and groveling appetites. All these evils, and a thousand more, spring from that one root, indulging yourself in costly apparel.

19. Why then does not every one that either loves or fears GOD, flee from it as from the face of a serpent? Why are *you* still so conformable to the irrational, sinful customs of a frantic world? Why do you still despise the express commandment of GOD, uttered in the plainest terms? You see the light: why do not you follow the light of your own mind? Your conscience tells you the truth: why do you not obey the dictates of your own conscience?

20. You answer, "Why, universal custom is against me; and I know not how to stem the mighty torrent." Not only the profane, but the religious world, run violently the other way. Look into, I do not say, the theatres, but the churches, nay, and the meetings of every denomination; (except a few old-fashioned *Quakers*, or the people called *Moravians*) look into the congregations in *London* or elsewhere, of those that are stiled *gospel ministers*: look into *Northampton* chapel; yea, into the tabernacle, or the chapel in *Tottenham Court-Road*: nay, look into the chapel in *West-street*, or that in the *City-Road*: look at the very people that sit under the pulpit, or by the side of it: and are not *those that can afford it* (I can hardly refrain from doing them the honour of naming their names) as richly, as fashionably adorned, as those of the same rank in other places?



21. This is a melancholy truth. I am ashamed of it: but I know not how to help it. I call heaven and earth to witness this day, that it is not my fault. The trumpet has not *given an uncertain sound*, for near fifty years last past. O GOD! thou knowest I have borne a clear and a faithful testimony. In print, in preaching, in meeting the society, I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of GOD. I am therefore clear of the blood of those that will not hear. It lies upon their own head.

22. I warn you once more, in the name, and in the presence, of GOD, that the number of those that rebel against GOD is no excuse for their rebellion. He hath expressly told us, *Thou shalt not follow the multitude to do evil*. It was said of a great, good man, he

“ Fear’d not, had heaven decreed it, to have stood  
Adverse against a world, and singly good.”

Who of you desire to share in that glorious character? To stand adverse against a world? If millions condemn you, it will be enough, that you are acquitted by GOD and your own conscience.

23. “ Nay, I think,” say some, “ I could bear the contempt or reproach of all the world beside. I regard none but my own relations, those especially that are of my own household. My father, my mother, my brothers and sisters (and perhaps one that is nearer than they all) are teasing me continually.” This is a trial indeed, such as very few can judge of, but those that bear it. “ *I have not strength to bear it.*” No, not of your own: certainly you have not. But *there is strength laid up for you on one that is mighty!* his grace is sufficient for you: and he now sees your case, and is just ready to give it you. Meantime remember his awful declaration, touching them that regard man more than GOD, *He that loveth father or mother, brother or sister, husband or wife, more than me, is not worthy of me.* Matt. 10. 37. Luke 14. 26.

24. But are there not some among you that did once renounce this conformity to the world, and dress in every point

point neat and plain, suitable to your profession? Why then did you not persevere therein? Why did you turn back from the good way? Did you contract an acquaintance, perhaps a friendship, with some that were still fond of drefs? It is no wonder then that you was sooner or later moved,

“ To measure back your steps to earth again.”

No less was to be expected, than that one sin would lead you on to another. It was one sin, to contract a friendship with any that knew not GOD: for *know ye not, that friendship with the world is enmity with GOD?* And this led you back into another, into that conformity to the world, from which ye had clean escaped. But what are you to do now? Why, if you are wise, escape for your life: no delay: look not behind you! Without loss of time, renounce the cause and the effect together. Now, to-day, before the heart is hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, cut off at one stroke that sinful friendship with the ungodly, and that sinful conformity to the world! Determine this day! Do not delay till to-morrow, lest you delay for ever. For GOD's sake, for your own soul's sake, fix your resolution now!

25. I conjure you all who have any regard for *me*, shew me before I go hence, that I have not laboured, even in this respect in vain, for near half a century. Let me see, before I die, a Methodist congregation, full as plain drest as a Quaker congregation. Only be more consistent with yourselves. Let your drefs be *cheap* as well as plain. Otherwise you do but trifle with GOD and me, and your own souls. I pray, let there be no costly silks among you, how grave soever they may be. Let there be no *Quaker-linen*, proverbially so called, for their exquisite fineness: no Brussels lace, no elephantine hats or bonnets, those scandals of female modesty. Be all of a piece, drest from head to foot, as persons *professing godliness*: professing to do every thing small and great, with the single view of pleasing GOD.

26. Let



26. Let not any of you, who are rich in this world, endeavour to excuse yourselves from this, by talking nonsense. It is stark, staring nonsense to say, "O I can *afford* this or that." If you have any regard to common sense, let that silly word never more come out of your mouth. No man living can *afford* to waste any part of what GOD has committed to his trust. None can *afford* to throw any part of that food and raiment into the sea, which was lodged with him, on purpose to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. And it is far worse than simple waste, to spend any part of it in gay or costly apparel. For this is no less, than to turn wholesome food into deadly poison. It is giving so much money, to poison both yourself and others, as far as your example spreads, with pride, vanity, anger, lust, love of the world, and a thousand *foolish and hurtful desires*, which tend to *pierce* them *through with many sorrows*. And is there no harm in all this? O GOD, arise, and maintain thy own cause! Let not men or devils any longer put out our eyes, and lead us blindfold into the pit of destruction.

27. I beseech you, every man that is here present before GOD, every woman, young or old, married or single, yea, every child that knows good from evil, take this to yourself. Each of you, for one, take the apostle's advice: at least, hinder not others from taking it. I beseech you, O ye parents, do not hinder your children from following their own convictions: even though you might think they would *look prettier*, if they were adorned with such gewgaws as other children wear. I beseech you, O ye husbands, do not hinder your wives: you, O ye wives, do not hinder your husbands, either by word or deed, from acting just as they are persuaded in their own minds. Above all, I conjure you, ye half Methodists, you that trim between us and the world, you that frequently, perhaps constantly, hear our preaching, but are in no farther connexion with us: yea, and all you that were once in full connexion with us, but are not so now: whatever ye do yourselves, do not say one word to hinder others from recovering and practising the advice which has been now given!

Yet

Yet a little while, and we shall not need these poor coverings: for this corruptible body shall put on incorruption. Yet a few days hence, and this mortal body shall put on immortality. In the meantime, let this be our only care, to *put off the old man*, our old nature, *which is corrupt*, which is altogether evil: and to *put on the new man*, *which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness*. In particular, *put on, as the elect of GOD, bowels of mercies, kindness, gentleness, long-suffering*. Yea, to sum up all in one word, *put on Christ, that when he shall appear, ye may appear with him in glory*.

North-Green, Dec. 30, 1786.

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## AN EXTRACT

Of the Revd. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 36.]

**S**UNDAY, *September 17*. I began again to declare in my own country the glad tidings of salvation, preaching three times, and afterwards expounding the holy scripture to a large company in the *Minories*. On *Monday* I rejoiced to meet with our little society, which now consisted of thirty-two persons. The next day I went to the condemned felons in *Newgate*, and offered them free salvation. In the evening I went to a society in *Bear-Yard*, and preached repentance and remission of sins. The next evening I spoke the truth in love at a society in *Aldersgate-street*. Some contradicted at first; but not long: so that nothing but love appeared at our parting.

*Thursday 21*. I went to a society in *Gutter-Lane*; but I could not declare the mighty works of GOD there; as I did



did afterwards at the *Savoy* in all simplicity. And the word did not return empty.

Finding abundance of people greatly exasperated by gross misrepresentations of the words I had spoken, I went to as many of them in private, as my time would permit. GOD gave me much love towards them all. Some were convinced they had been mistaken. And who knoweth but GOD will soon return to the rest, and leave a blessing behind him?

On *Saturday* 23. I was enabled to speak strong words both at *Newgate* and at Mr. *E*'s society: and the next day at St. *Anne*'s, and twice at St. *John*'s, *Clerkenwell*; so that I fear they will bear me there no longer.

*Tuesday* 26. I declared the gospel of peace to a small company at *Windfor*. The next evening Mr. *H*. preached to the societies at *Bow*; but not *the truth as it is in Jesus*. I was afraid lest *the lame should be turned out of the way*: but GOD answered the thoughts of my heart, and took away my fear, in a manner I did not expect, even by the words of *Thomas Sternhold*. They were these (sung immediately after the sermon.)

Thy mercy is above all things,  
O GOD; it doth excel;  
In trust whereof, as in thy wings,  
The sons of men shall dwell.

Within thy house they shall be fed  
With plenty at their will;  
Of all delights they shall be sped,  
And take thereof their fill.

Because the well of life most pure  
Doth ever flow from thee;  
And in thy light we are most sure  
Eternal light to see.

From such as thee desire to know  
Let not thy grace depart;  
Thy righteousness declare and show  
To men of upright heart.

*Saturday*

*Saturday 30.* One who had been a zealous opposer of *this way*, sent and desired to speak with me immediately. He had all the signs of settled despair, both in his countenance and behaviour. He said, "He had been enslaved to sin many years, especially to drunkenness: that he had long used all the means of grace, had constantly gone to church and sacrament, had read the scripture, and used much private prayer, and yet was nothing profited." I desired we might join in prayer. After a short space he rose and his countenance was no longer sad. He said, "Now I know, GOD loveth *me*, and has forgiven *my* sins. And sin shall not have dominion over me; for Christ hath set me free." And according to his faith it was unto him.

*Sunday, October 1.* I preached both morning and afternoon at St. George's in the East. On the following days I endeavoured to explain the way of salvation, to many who had misunderstood what had been preached concerning it.

*Friday 6.* I preached at St. Antholin's once more. In the afternoon I went to the Rev. Mr. Bedford, to tell him between me and him alone, of the injury he had done both to GOD and his brother, by preaching and printing that very weak sermon on *Assurance*, which was an *Ignoratio Elenchi* from beginning to end; seeing the assurance we preach is of quite another kind from that he writes against. We speak of, *An assurance of our present pardon*; Not (as he does) *of our final perseverance*.

In the evening I began expounding at a little society in *Wapping*. On *Sunday 8*, I preached at the *Savoy* chapel (I suppose the last time) on the parable (or history rather) of the Pharisee and publican praying in the temple. On *Monday 9*, I set out for *Oxford*. In walking I read the truly surprising narrative, of the conversions lately wrought in and about the town of *Northampton* in *New-England*. Surely *this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes!*

An extract from this I wrote to a friend, concerning the state of those who are *weak in faith*. His answer, which I received on *Saturday 14*, threw me into great perplexity, till after crying to GOD, I took up a bible, which opened on these words; *And Jabez called on the GOD of Israel,*  
*saying,*



*saying, Oh, that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast! And that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil that it may not grieve me! And GOD granted him that which he requested.*

This however, with a sentence in the evening lesson, put me upon considering my own state more deeply. And what then occurred to me was as follows:

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.” Now the surest test whereby we can examine ourselves, Whether we be indeed in the faith, is that given by St. Paul, *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are past away. Behold all things are become new.*

First, His judgments are new: his judgment of himself, of happiness, of holiness.

He judges himself to be altogether fallen short of the glorious image of GOD. To have no good thing abiding in him by nature; but all that is corrupt and abominable: in a word, to be wholly earthly, sensual, and devilish: a motley mixture of beast and devil.

Thus, by the grace of GOD in Christ, I judge of myself. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

Again, His judgment concerning happiness is new. He would as soon expect to dig it out of the earth, as to find it in riches, honour, pleasure (so called) or indeed in the enjoyment of any creature. He knows there can be no happiness on earth, but in the enjoyment of GOD, and in the foretaste of those *rivers of pleasure which flow at his right-hand for evermore.*

Thus, by the grace of GOD in Christ, I judge of happiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

Yet again, His judgment concerning holiness is new. He no longer judges it to be an outward thing. To consist either in doing no harm, in doing good, or in using the ordinances of GOD. He sees it is, The life of GOD in the soul; the image of GOD fresh stamped on the heart. An entire renewal of the mind in every temper and thought, after the likeness of him that created it.

Thus, by the grace of GOD in Christ, I judge of holiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

Secondly,

Secondly, His designs are new. It is the design of his life, Not to heap up treasures upon earth, not to gain the praise of men, not to indulge the desires of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life; but to regain the image of GOD; to have the life of GOD again planted in his soul; and to be renewed after his likeness, in righteousness and all true holiness.

This, by the grace of GOD in Christ, is the design of my life. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

Thirdly, His desires are new, and indeed the whole train of his passions and inclinations. They are no longer fixt on earthly things. They are now set on the things of heaven. His love and joy and hope, his sorrow and fear, have all respect to things above. They all point heavenward. Where his treasure is, there is his heart also.

I dare not say I am a new creature in this respect. For other desires often *arise* in my heart. But they do not *reign*. I put them all under my feet through Christ which strengtheneth me. Therefore believe he is *creating* me anew in this also, and that he has begun, tho' not finished, his work.

Fourthly, His conversation is new. It is *always seasoned with salt, and fit to minister grace to the hearers*.

So is mine, by the grace of GOD in Christ. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature.

Fifthly, His actions are new. The tenor of his life singly points at the glory of GOD. All his substance and time are devoted thereto. *Whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does, it either springs from, or leads to, the love of GOD and man.*

Such, by the grace of GOD in Christ, is the tenor of my life. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature.

But St. Paul tells us elsewhere, That *the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance*. Now altho', by the grace of GOD in Christ, I find a measure of some of these in myself, viz. of peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance: yet others I find not. I cannot find in myself the love of GOD or of Christ. Hence my deadness and wanderings in public prayer.



Hence it is that even in the holy communion, I have rarely any more than a cold attention. Hence when I hear of the highest instance of GOD's love, my heart is still senseless and unaffected. Yea, at this moment, I feel no more love to him, than to one I had never heard of.

Again, I have not that joy in the Holy Ghost: no settled, lasting joy. Nor have I such a peace as excludes the possibility either of fear or doubt. When holy men have told me, "I had no faith," I have often doubted, whether I had or no. And those doubts have made me very uneasy, till I was relieved by prayer and the holy scriptures.

Yet upon the whole, although I have not yet that joy in the Holy Ghost, nor that love of GOD shed abroad in my heart, nor the full assurance of faith, nor the (proper) witness of the Spirit with my spirit that I am a child of GOD, much less am I, in the full and proper sense of the words, *in Christ a new creature*: I nevertheless trust that I have a measure of faith, and am *accepted in the beloved*: I trust, *the hand-writing that was against me is blotted out*, and that I am *reconciled to GOD thro' his Son*."

Sunday 15. I preached twice at the *Castle*, and afterwards expounded at three societies. Wednesday evening I came to *London* again, and on Friday met a society (of soldiers chiefly) at *Westminster*. On Sunday 22. I preached at *Bloomsbury* in the morning, and at *Skadwell* in the afternoon. Wednesday 25. I preached at *Basing-shaw* church: on Friday morning at St. *Antholin's*: on Sunday at *Issington* and at *London-Wall*. Strange doctrine to a polite audience!

In the evening, being troubled at what some said, of *the kingdom of GOD within us*, and doubtful of my own state, I called upon GOD, and received this answer from his word, *He himself also waited for the kingdom of GOD*. "But should not I wait in silence and retirement?" was the thought that immediately struck into my mind. I opened my testament again on those words, *Seest thou not, how faith wrought together with his works? and by works was faith made perfect*.

[Continued to Page 124.]

## THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[Continued from Page 47.]

7. **I**N the evening I read the experiences of some of GOD's children, and found mine agreed with theirs. Hereby my faith was strengthened, and my hope considerably increased: I intreated the Lord, to deal with his servant according to his mercy, and take all the glory to himself. I prayed earnestly, and was persuaded, I should have peace with GOD and dominion over sin: not doubting but the full assurance also would be given in GOD's good time. I continued calling on him for an increase of faith (for still I had some fear of being in a delusion.) And having continued my supplication till near one in the morning, I opened my bible on those words, "*Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee. He will not suffer the righteous to be moved.*" Filled with joy, I fell on my knees, to beg of GOD that I might always cast my burden upon him. My hope was now greatly increased: and I thought I saw myself conqueror over sin, hell, and all manner of affliction.

8. With this comfortable promise I shut up my bible, being now perfectly satisfied. As I shut it, I cast my eyes on that word, *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name I will do it.* So having asked grace of GOD to serve him till death, I went cheerfully to bed."

9. So far we have Mr. Fletcher's own account under his own hand. From this time he *had the witness in himself*: he knew that he had *redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins.* But he still continued pleading with the Lord to take a fuller possession of his heart: till one day, as he was in earnest prayer, lying prostrate on his face before GOD, he saw, as it were, our blessed Lord, hanging and bleeding on the cross. And at the same time those words were spoken with power to his heart:

Seiz'd



“ Seiz’d by the rage of sinful men,  
 I see him bound, and bruise’d, and slain;  
 ’Tis done! the martyr dies!  
 His life to ransom ours is given:  
 And lo! the fiercest fire of heaven  
 Consumes the sacrifice.

He suffers both from men and God!  
 He bears the universal load  
 Of guilt and misery!  
 He suffers to reverse our doom:  
 And lo! my Lord is here become  
 The bread of life to me.”

10. I believe this was in January, 1756, in the second year after he removed to *Tern*. Now all his bonds were broken: he breathed a purer air, and was able to say with confidence, *The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of GOD, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* By means of this faith, sin was under his feet. Knowing in whom he had believed, he could continually triumph in the Lord, and praise the GOD of his salvation.

11. From this time he walked cheerfully, as well as valiantly in the ways of GOD! He closely followed his Master, *denying himself, and taking up his cross daily.* And thinking he had not leisure in the day for the great work which he had in hand, he made it an invariable rule, to sit up two whole nights in a week. These he dedicated to reading, meditation, and prayer, in order to enter more deeply into that communion with the Father and the Son, which was the delight of his soul. Mean time he lived entirely on vegetable food, and for some time on bread with milk and water. None can doubt if these austerities were well intended. But it seems they were not well judged. It is probable, they gave the first wound to an excellent constitution, and laid the foundation of many infirmities, which nothing but death could cure.

## C H A P. III.

*From his Conversion to his settling at Madely.*

1. **I**T was not long after he had himself *tasted the powers of the world to come*, that he was preſt in ſpirit, to exhort others to ſeek after the ſame bleſſing. And he was the more ſtrongly excited to this, by ſeeing the world all around him *lying in wickedneſs*. Being deeply ſenſible of the goodneſs of GOD on the one hand, and the miſery of mankind on the other, he found an earneſt longing

“ To pluck poor brands out of the fire,  
To ſnatch them from the verge of hell.”

This he began to do a conſiderable time before he was admitted into holy orders. And even his firſt labours of love were far from being in vain. For though he was by no means perfect in the *Engliſh* tongue, particularly with regard to the pronounciation of it; yet the earneſtneſs with which he ſpoke (ſeldom to be found in *Engliſh* preachers) and the unſpeakably tender affection to poor, undone ſinners, which breathed in every word and geſture, drew multitudes of people to hear him: and by the bleſſing of GOD, his word made ſo deep an impreſſion on their hearts, that very few went empty away.

2. From this time, till he undertook the direct care of ſouls, he uſed to be in *London*, during the ſitting of the parliament, and the reſt of the year at *Tern-Hall* (as it was then called) inſtructing the young gentlemen. Every Sunday he attended the pariſh church at *Atcham*. But when the ſervice was ended, inſtead of going home in the coach which was always ready, he uſually took a ſolitary walk by the *Severn* ſide, and ſpent ſome time in meditation and prayer. A pious domeſtic of Mr. *Hill's*, having frequently obſerved him, one Sunday deſired leave to walk with him, which he conſtantly did from that time. The

account



account which he (Mr. *Vaughan*, still living in *London*) gives of Mr. *Fletcher*, is as follows. “ It was our ordinary custom when the church service was over, to retire into the most lonely fields or meadows; where we frequently either kneeled down, or prostrated ourselves upon the ground. At those happy seasons I was a witness of such pleadings and wrestlings with GOD, such exercises of faith and love, as I have not known in any one ever since. The consolations which we then received from GOD, induced us to appoint two or three nights in a week, when we duly met, after his pupils were asleep. We met also constantly on Sunday, between four and five in the morning. Sometimes I stepped into his study on other days. I rarely saw any book before him, besides the *Bible* and the *Christian Pattern*. And he was seldom in any other company, unless when necessary business required, besides that of the unworthy writer of this paper.

3. “ When he was in the country, he used to visit an officer of excise, at *Atcham*, to be instructed in singing. On my desiring him to give me some account of what he recollected concerning Mr. *Fletcher*, he answered thus: “ As to that man of GOD, Mr. *Fletcher*, it is but little that I remember of him; it being above nine and twenty years since the last time I saw him. But this I well remember, his conversation with me was always sweet and favourable. He was too wise to suffer any of his precious moments to be trifled away. When there was company to dine at Mr. *Hill*’s, he frequently retired into the garden, and contentedly dined on a piece of bread, and a few bunches of currants. Indeed, in his whole manner of living, he was a pattern of abstemiousness. Mean time, how great was his sweetness of temper and heavenly-mindedness! I never saw it equalled in any one. How often, when I parted with him at *Tern-Hall*, have his eyes and hands been lifted up to heaven, to implore a blessing upon me, with fervour and devoutness unequalled by any I ever saw! I firmly believe he has not left in this land, or perhaps in any other, one luminary like himself. I conclude, wishing this light may be so held up, that many may see the

the glory thereof, and be transformed into its likeness. May you and I, and all that love the Lord Jesus Christ, be partakers of that holiness, which was so conspicuous in him !”

4. “ Our interviews for singing and conversation” (continues Mr. *Vaughan*, who was often present on these occasions) “ were seldom concluded without prayer. In which we were frequently joined by her that is now my wife (then a servant in the family :) as likewise by a poor widow in the village, who had also known the power of GOD unto salvation, and who died some years since, praising GOD with her latest breath. These were the only persons in the country, whom he chose for his familiar friends. But he sometimes walked over to *Shrewsbury*, to see Mrs. *Glynne*, or Mr. *Appleton* : (who likewise now rests from his labours, after having many years adorned the gospel.) He also visited any of the poor in the neighbourhood, that were upon a sick-bed. And when no other person could be procured, performed even the meanest offices for them.”

5. It was in the year 1757, that he was ordained both deacon and priest. He was ordained at *Whitehall* : and the same day, being informed that I had no one to assist me at *West-street* chapel, he came away as soon as ever the ordination was over, and assisted me in the administration of the Lord’s Supper. He was now doubly diligent in preaching, not only in the chapels at *West-street* and *Spital-fields*, but wherever the Providence of GOD opened a door to proclaim the everlasting gospel. This he frequently did, not only in *English*, but likewise in *French*, his native language : of which he was allowed by all competent judges to be a compleat master.

6. “ The first time,” says Mr. *Vaughan*, “ he preached in the country, was at *Atcham* church, on June 19, 1757. His text was, James iv. 4. (a very bold beginning !) *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not, that the friendship of this world is enmity against GOD ?* The congregation stood amazed, and gazed upon him, as if he had been a monster.



monster. But to *me* he appeared as a messenger sent from heaven."

7. It was not soon, that he was invited again to preach in *Atcham* church. But he was invited to preach in several other churches in the neighbourhood. He was first invited to preach at *Wroxeter*, and afterwards, at the abbey church in *Shrewsbury*. But not being yet perfect in the *English* tongue, he wrote down all the sermons he preached in churches. But I doubt whether he preached above six times in the six months while he staid in the country. On my telling him, I wished he had more opportunities of preaching in this unenlightened part of the land; he answered, "The will of GOD be done: I am in his hands. And if he does not call me to so much public duty, I have the more time for study, prayer, and praise."

8. In the year 1753, there were many *French* prisoners on their parole at *Tunbridge*. Being desired to preach to them in their own language, he readily complied. Many of them appeared to be deeply affected, and earnestly requested that he would preach to them every Lord's-day. But some advised them, first to present a petition to the bishop of *London* for leave. They did so: and (who would believe it?) the good bishop peremptorily rejected their petition! If I had known this at the time, king *George* should have known it: and I believe he would have given the bishop little thanks. An odd incident followed. A few months after, the bishop died of a cancer in his mouth. Perhaps some may think, this was a just retribution, for silencing such a prophet, on such an occasion! I am not ashamed to acknowledge, this is my own sentiment: and I do not think it any breach of charity to suppose that an action so unworthy a christian bishop, had its punishment in this world.

9. When he returned from *London* in the same year, he was more frequently invited to preach, in several of the neighbouring churches. And before his quitting the country, he gave me a few printed papers, entitled, "A Christmas-box for Journeymen and Apprentices." I mention

tion it the rather, because I suppose, this was the first thing which he ever published.

10. It was in the beginning of June 1759, that he returned the last time from *London* to *Tern-Hall*. And being now less frequently called to public duty, he enjoyed his beloved retirement, giving himself up to study, meditation, and prayer, and walking closely with GOD. Indeed his whole life was now a life of prayer: and so intensely was his mind fixed upon GOD, that I have heard him say, "I would not move from my seat, without lifting up my heart to GOD." Wherever we met, if we were alone, his first salute was, "Do I meet you praying?" And if we were talking on any point of divinity, when we were in the depth of our discourse, he would often break off abruptly, and ask, "Where are our hearts now?" If ever the misconduct of an absent person was mentioned, his usual reply was, "Let us pray for him."

11. It was, as I remember, about the close of this summer, that he was frequently desired, sometimes to assist, at other times to perform the whole service for, Mr. *Chambers*, then vicar of *Madeley*. On these occasions it was, that he contracted such an affection for the people of *Madeley*, as nothing could hinder from increasing more and more to the day of his death. While he officiated at *Madeley*, as he still lived at the Hall, ten miles distant from it, a groom was ordered to get a horse ready for him, every Sunday morning. But so great was his aversion for giving trouble to any one, that if the groom did not wake at the time, he seldom would suffer him to be called; but prepared the horse for himself.

12. In the year 1760, the living of *Madeley* fell vacant, and Mr. *Fletcher* was presented to it, which he accepted in preference to another, that was of double the value. He embraced it as his peculiar charge, the object of his most tender affection. And he was now at leisure to attend it, being fully discharged from his former employment. For his pupils were removed to *Cambridge*. The elder of them died about the time of his coming of age. The younger first represented the town of *Salop* (as



his father had done) and afterwards the county, till he took his seat in the house of peers, as baron *Berwick*, of *Atcham-House*. This is now the name that is given, to what was formerly called *Tern-Hall*.

#### C H A P. IV.

*From his settling at Madeley, to his leaving Trevecka.*

1. **H**E settled at *Madeley*, according to his desire, in the year 1760. And from the beginning, he was a laborious workman in his Lord's vineyard. At his first settling there, the hearts of several were unaccountably set against him: insomuch that he was constrained to warn some of these, that if they did not repent, GOD would speedily cut them off. And the truth of those predictions was shewn over and over, by the signal accomplishment of them. But no opposition could hinder him from going on in his Master's work, and suppressing vice in every possible manner. Those sinners, who endeavoured to hide themselves from him, he pursued to every corner of his parish; by all sorts of means, public and private, early and late, in season and out of season, intreating and warning them to flee from the wrath to come. Some made it an excuse, for not attending the church-service on a Sunday morning, that they could not awake early enough to get their families ready. He provided for this also. Taking a bell in his hand, he set out every Sunday at five in the morning, and went round the most distant parts of the parish, inviting all the inhabitants to the house of GOD.

2. Yet notwithstanding all the pains he took, he saw, for some time, little fruit of his labour: insomuch that he was more than once in doubt, whether he had not mistaken his place: whether GOD had indeed called him, to confine himself to one town, or to labour more at large in his vineyard? He was not free from this doubt, when a multitude of people flocked together at a funeral. He seldom let

let these awful opportunities slip without giving a solemn exhortation. At the close of the exhortation which was then given, one man was so grievously offended, that he could not refrain from breaking out into scurrilous, yea, menacing language. But notwithstanding all his struggling against it, the word fastened upon his heart. At first indeed he roared like a lion; but he soon wept like a child. Not long after he came to Mr. *Fletcher* in the most humble manner, asking pardon for his outrageous behaviour, and begging an interest in his prayers. This was such a refreshment as he stood in need of: and it was but a short time, before this poor broken-hearted sinner was filled with joy unspeakable. He then spared no pains in exhorting his fellow-sinners, to flee from the wrath to come.

3. It was not long after, when one Sunday evening, Mr. *Fletcher*, after performing the usual duty at *Madeley*, was about to set out for *Madeley* wood, to preach and catechize as usual. But just then notice was brought (which should have been given before) that a child was to be buried. His waiting till the child was brought, prevented his going to the wood. And herein the providence of GOD appeared. For at this very time, many of the colliers, who neither feared GOD, nor regarded men, were baiting a bull, just by the preaching-house. And having had plenty of drink, they had all agreed, as soon as he came, to bait the parson. Part of them were appointed to pull him off his horse, and the rest, to set the dogs upon him. One of these very men afterwards confessed, that he was with them when this agreement was made: and that afterwards, while they were in the most horrid manner, cursing and swearing at their disappointment, a large china punch-bowl which held above a gallon, without any apparent cause (for it was not touched by any person or thing) fell all to shivers. This so alarmed him, that he forsook all his companions, and determined to save his own soul.

4. From the beginning he did not confine his labours to his own parish. For many years he regularly preached at places eight, ten, or sixteen miles off: returning the same night, though he seldom got home before one or two in  
the



the morning. At a little society which he had gathered about six miles from *Madeley*, he preached two or three times a week, beginning at five in the morning. As for visiting the sick, this was a work for which he was always ready: if he heard the knocker in the coldest winter night, his window was thrown open in a moment. And when he understood, either that some one was hurt in a pit, or that a neighbour was likely to die; no consideration was ever had of the darkness of the night, or the severity of the weather; but this answer was always given, "I will attend you immediately."

5. But in one respect Mr. *Fletcher* has frequently been blamed; namely, for deserting a place where GOD had eminently owned him. I mean *Trevecka* in *Wales*. I believe it is therefore my bounden duty, to clear up the whole affair. And I cannot do this better than by transcribing the substance of an account which I have received from Mr. *Benson*, in answer to my enquiries.

6. "My acquaintance with him," says he, "commenced when I was at *Kingswood*, I think in the year 1768. As he now and then made a short excursion from *Madeley* to *Bath* or *Bristol*, in one of those excursions we invited him to give us a sermon at *Kingswood*. He was peculiarly assisted while he was applying those encouraging words, *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out*. The people were exceedingly affected; indeed quite melted down. The tears streamed so fast from the eyes of the poor colliers, that their grizzly, black faces were washed by them, and almost universally streaked with white. And as to himself, his zealous soul had been carried out so far beyond his strength, that when he concluded, he put off a shirt which was as wet as if it had been dipped in water. But this was nothing strange: whenever he preached, it was generally the case. From this time I conceived a particular esteem for him, chiefly on account of his piety: and wished much for a greater intimacy with him; a blessing which I soon after obtained.

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The

*The JOURNAL of FRANCIS ASBURY, Bishop of the  
Methodist-Episcopal Church.*

From March 26, 1772, to April 14, 1773.

[Continued from Vol. I. Page 198.]

TO THE READER.

**W**E are very sensible of the probability of its being remarked, even by many candid and judicious persons, That an apparent sameness runs through this Journal. The objection, however, may receive in some degree a reply, possibly it may be removed altogether, by the following considerations:

I. This Journal contains the simple exercises of the author's mind and life, in the way of a private diary; there having been no intention for many years, of making it public: his charge, as well as labours and travels having become, lately, more extensive, he looks upon himself as more responsible than before.

II. It was written in much haste.

III. To transcribe and dress it up with greater elegance, would materially alter its original design.

IV. A brief history of Methodism in America, may be communicated through this medium.

V. Those for whom it is chiefly intended, are plain and simple people, who will look for nothing elaborate or refined; but for genuine experience and naked truth.

**A**FTER having preached in a large upper room, at Mr. Thompson's in *Amboy*, where many came to hear, and I was favoured with much power in my own soul; an innkeeper invited me to his house, and was kind enough to desire that I would call on him when I came again.

Friday 27. I set off, on a rough-gaited horse, for *Burlington*; and after being much shaken, breakfasted at *Spotf-wood*; fed my horse again at *Cross-wicks*, and then thought to push on to *Burlington*; but the roads being bad, and myself



myself and horse weary, I lodged with a Quaker, on whom I called to enquire the way. He not only invited me to tarry all night, but also treated me with great kindness.

The next day I rode to town, very weary; and on the Lord's day preached in the court-house, to many hearers.

Monday 30. After riding to *New-mills*, in company with some friends, in a waggon, preached in a Baptist meeting-house, and was kindly received.

Tuesday 31. Finding the people were divided among themselves, I preached from these words, *This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another*; and humbly hope, my labour was not in vain. The same night we came to *Burlington*.

April 2. I came to *Philadelphia*, and finding Brother *Boardman* and Brother *Webb* there, was much comforted. Brother *Boardman*'s plan was, that he should go to *Boston*; Brother *Pilmore* to *Virginia*; Brother *Wright* to *York*; and that I should stay three months in *Philadelphia*. With this I was well pleased; and earnestly desire that my whole soul could be more devoted to GOD.

Friday 4. We dined with Mr. *Roberdeau*, who cannot keep negroes, for conscience sake: and this was the topic of our conversation.

Saturday 5. This morning my mind was composed and serene; fixed, I humbly hope, on GOD alone. My desire is, to be more constantly devoted than ever: yea, to walk in holiness before the Lord.

April 7. In the evening, preached to a very large audience in the church, after preaching in the day, to many poor mortals in the bettering-house.

April 8. Set out for *Bohemia*, to find Mr. *Wright* (who had been at his own discretion) that he might wait on Mr. *Boardman*, in order to go to *York* for five months. Stopping at Mrs. *Withy*'s in *Chester*, to feed myself and my horse, I enquired about preaching in that town, and found this to be the house where Mr. *Boardman* and Mr. *Pilmore* put up; and that the people were pleased with Methodist preaching. After leaving word that I would call to preach there, on my return, set off for *Wilmington*, expecting to meet

meet Mr. *Wright* there; but we accidentally met, just as he was turning off to Mr. *Tussey's*, for lodging, about four miles from the town. He seemed glad to see me, and willing to be subject to order.

The next morning, Mr. *Wright* went on his way to *Philadelphia*. Having a desire to go and see and hear how things went, I desired him to call and preach at *Chester*; and proceeded to the house of Mr. *Sedham*, a fast friend of the Methodists; and then rode on to *Newcastle*, and stopt at the house of Brother *Furnace*, a tavern-keeper, but a good man. Preached there to a few people, but met with opposition, and found the Methodists had done no great good. The court-house here is shut against us; but it is open for dances and balls: and Brother *Furnace* has lost his custom by receiving us. However, we were comforted together.

April 10. Set out for *Bohemia*, where I found that some mischievous opposers had thrown the people into confusion.

I have had some serious thoughts of going to *Baltimore*; but the distance, which is 90 miles, seems too much at present.

April 11. Found an inattention to study, an unsettled frame of mind, much insensibility of soul, and a backwardness to prayer. Lord! help me with an active warmth to move; and with a vigorous soul to rise.

Visited an old man who was sick, with whom I had some conversation, though not much; but came away without prayer; and was justly blamed both by my friends and myself. I would have prayed with him, but two men came in, whose countenances I did not like; and therefore neglected my duty through the fear of man. I have nothing to plead, to palliate my omission. It is true, that to introduce prayer among prayerless people, is not an easy matter; yet this is no excuse for me. Lord! forgive both my secret and open sins; my sins of omission and commission. Help me to have respect to all thy commandments; and to be blameless before thee in all things.

Lord's



Lord's day 11. Preached to-day at my friend *Hersey's*, as also the evening before. The house was filled both before and after dinner. The Lord gave me great liberty and power; and I humbly believe, that some of the great ones trembled under the word; at least one, who was lord of the manor. Oh, that it may not wear off! I preached from these words, *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget GOD*. After describing the wicked, and shewing wherein they forget GOD; I attempted to prove the torments to be real and eternal, from the real joys and duration of heaven.

Monday 12. Visited *E. Thompson*, and saw his father, who is an hundred years old, or more. He had lately lost his wife, who was younger than he; and in her he lost his nurse and earthly comfort. The old man was in great trouble; but had some sense of divine things, and joined me in prayer.

Tuesday 13. Was advised and invited to preach at *Wilmington*; which I did, though there were but few to hear.

Wednesday 14. Rode to *Chester*, and preached in the court-house. The church-minister and many Quakers were present; but the congregation appeared to be the wildest I had seen in *America*. I felt much, myself; and believe, that many others felt also: so that I humbly hope the labour was not in vain. In the morning I visited, and spoke with great freedom to, four men who were under sentence of death.

Thursday 15. I rode, through a heavy rain, to *Philadelphia*, and preached the next morning with some freedom.

Tuesday 20. My mind is quiet and serene. I am now free from company, which is very pleasing to me, having found that much company is both disagreeable and dangerous.

Wednesday 21. Met the society, and found both life and liberty among the people. This night, Brother *Williams* came in from *Virginia*. He gives a flaming account of the  
the

the work there. Many of the people seem to be ripe for the gospel, and ready to receive us. I humbly hope, before long, about 7 preachers of us will spread seven or eight hundred miles, and preach in as many places as we are able to attend. Lord! make us humble, watchful, and useful to the end of our lives.

April 23. Brother *Williams* set off for *New-York*.

April 24. Preached at *Philadelphia* with freedom and power.

April 25. Preached to many people with some sharpness. In the evening, I kept the door, met the society, and read Mr. *Wesley's* epistle to them.

Tuesday 28. I intended to go out of town; but could not get a horse. So stayed for Brother *Wright*, and heard that many were offended at my shutting them out of society-meeting, as they had been greatly indulged before. But this does not trouble me. While I stay, the rules must be attended to; and I cannot suffer myself to be guided by half-hearted Methodists. An elderly gentleman told me very gravely, that "the opinion of the people was much changed, within a few days, about Methodism: and that the Quakers and other dissenters had laxed *their* discipline; that none but the Roman Catholics kept it up with strictness." But these things do not move me.

Wednesday 29. Set out for *Burlington*, where I met with Brother *Webb* and Brother *King*. I found the people there very lively. Two persons have obtained justification under Brother *Webb*; and a certain dr. *T——t*, a man of high life, was touched under Brother *Boardman's* preaching last night. I admire the kindness of my friends to such a poor worm as me. Oh! my GOD! remember them! remember me!

Thursday 30. Humbly hope, the word was blest to a large number of people, who attended while I preached at the court-house.

Set out for *Philadelphia*; but about a mile from the city, found that the bridge could not be crossed on horseback; so I left my horse, and walked to the ferry. Bro-



ther *Wright* took the horse and went to *Burlington*, on his way to *York*. Was desired to attend the execution of the prisoners at *Chester*. *John King* went with me. We found them penitent; and two of the four obtained peace with GOD, and seemed very thankful. I preached, with great freedom, to a great number of people under the gaol wall. The sheriff was friendly, and very kind. *John King* preached at the gallows to a vast multitude; after which I prayed with them. The executioner pretended to tie them all up, but only tied one, and let the rest fall. One of them was a young man about 15. We saw them all afterwards, and exhorted them to be careful. We returned to *Philadelphia* the same night, and I gave an exhortation.

Tuesday, May 5. Set out for *Burlington* again, and preached with life to a free and loving people. But how is my soul troubled that I am not more holy? O my GOD! my soul groans and longs for this.

May 6. My heart was much humbled; but the Lord enabled me to preach with power in my soul.

Thursday 7. Visited some prisoners; one of them, who is to be tried for his life, seemed much affected. In the evening, preached with power and life; and feel my heart much united to this people. Next morning, set off for *Philadelphia*; got in, time enough for intercession; after which, visited a sick friend, who rested her soul on GOD; and then preached in the evening.

Sunday 10. Preached in the morning; attended two places of worship in the day; preached again at night; and had a comfortable time in meeting the society.

Monday 11. Was much stirred up, and found an increase of life in visiting the society; and then preached with comfort and power in the evening.

Tuesday 12. Set off for the *Ferseys*. My mind enjoys sweet peace, and the love of GOD. It is my desire to be entirely devoted to GOD, who opens the hearts of the people to receive me, and my heart to deliver his counsel to them.

*An Extract of a Letter from Philip Cox, Elder of the Methodist-Episcopal Church in America (then Preacher) to Bishop Coke, dated, Suffex-county, Virginia, July 1787.*

Reverend and very dear Sir,

WHERE love is mutual, a correspondence is desirable, delightful, and sometimes profitable. I believe it will contribute to your joy to hear of the best of causes in *America*. My sincere prayer is, that GOD may grant you a long and prosperous life, and crown your head with his choicest blessings both in time and eternity. In this letter I shall endeavour to give you the truest account I can, of the work of GOD in my circuit, since the last conference.

About the 20th of May I took my station in *Suffex-circuit, Virginia*; and GOD soon gave me to see the fruit of my weak endeavours. A few were convinced of sin, and one or two converted the first time I went round my circuit. The second time I heard that twenty souls were converted in one day, at *Maybrey's* chapel, under Brother *Easter's* preaching. A few days after this, I received a letter from Brother *Grigg*, my helper, informing me that eight souls were converted to GOD in one of his meetings, a few days before he wrote to me. I found a struggle with my wicked heart, for a moment, before I could consent to rejoice, because it was not done by my instrumentality; but the Lord soon delivered me from this temptation. About four days after, I preached at Brother *Hawkins's*, and the power of GOD came down among the people, and many fell to the floor, and cried aloud to GOD for mercy. The next day I preached at Brother *Perkins's*; many were then down, and two found the Lord. The next day, at Brother *Smith's*; near twenty were down on the floor, crying to GOD; and I believe four or five found peace. The next day being the Lord's day, I preached at Brother *Bonner's* at 10 o'clock; the congregation was large: I believe upwards of fifty were in loud cries for mercy, and ten or twelve found the pearl of great price. Many of the  
old



professors were so wrought on, that they had no use of their limbs. Brother *Davis* and his wife were so affected, that I was constrained this afternoon to go to my appointment in *Petersburg*, and leave the friends of that place behind: but before the preaching began, Brother *Davis* with the others, came home. Under my last prayer, an orphan girl, about twelve years old, cried aloud for mercy. As I was going to meet the class, I insisted that she should be brought into the class-room. Within a quarter of an hour, the power of GOD struck Brother *Davis's* little daughter (she is about nine years old) and in less than half an hour, I believe, GOD set her and the orphan (both) at liberty. They praised GOD aloud, and we opened the door, and all that would, came in; and in a short time, ten or twelve more were down on the floor, crying for mercy: this alarmed the whole town, and many came to see (as they said) what the devil had to pay. Among the rest, two young storekeepers brought a monkey, and turned it loose among us.

Tuesday, the 24th of July, I preached at Brother *Gary's*, and some few souls, I believe, were converted. Thursday, I attended *Brunswick* quarter-meeting at *Maybrey's* chapel: here was a great work indeed! Brother *O'Kelly* preached, Brother *Dromgoole*, *Brown*, *Easter*, and myself exhorted: hundreds were in loud cries for mercy. The second day was much greater: it is thought, above a hundred whites found peace with GOD, besides as many negroes on that day.

Saturday the quarter-meeting for *Sussex*-circuit began at Brother *Jones's* chapel; but before the preachers got there, the work broke out; so that when we came to the chapel, above sixty were down on the floor, groaning in loud cries to GOD for mercy. Brother *O'Kelly* tried to preach, but could not be heard for the cries of the distressed. It is thought our audience consisted of no less than five thousand the first day; and the second day, of twice that number. We preached to them in the open air, and in the chapel, and in the barn by Brother *Jones's* house, at the same time. Such a sight my eyes never saw before, and

never read of, either in Mr. *Wesley's* journals, or any other writings concerning the Lord's pouring out the Spirit, except the account in scripture of the day of Pentecost. Never, I believe, was the like seen since the apostolic age: hundreds were at once down on the ground in bitter cries to GOD for mercy. Here were many of the first quality in the country, wallowing in the dust with their silks and broadcloths, powdered heads, rings, and ruffles, and some of them so convulsed that they could neither speak nor stir: many stood by, persecuting, till the power of the Lord laid hold of them, and then they fell themselves, and cried as loud as those they just before persecuted. We are not able to give a just account how many were converted, and as we had rather be under than over the just number, we believe that near two hundred whites and more than half as many blacks, professed to find him of whom Moses and the prophets did write.

Monday morning, Brother *O'Kelly* and myself rode to Brother *Travess's*, hoping to get some sleep, as our four first days' meetings held till near midnight, each time: but when we got to bed, we could rest but little for the cries of the distressed, some in the houses where we lay, and some in the plantations, and in the woods. On Tuesday, Brother *O'Kelly* preached at Brother *Frederic Bonner's*, and above fifty souls professed, that they then entered into the liberty of the children of GOD. Three daughters of one *Jesse Lee*, a Baptist preacher (uncle to *Jesse Lee*, our preacher) were down on the floor, crying to GOD to deliver them. Their brother came in, and got one of the daughters up to carry her out, swearing that she should not expose herself there: but before he got her out of the house, the Lord exposed him, striking him to the floor, and constraining him to cry, "Save, or I sink into hell." He went the next day with us, to preaching, to a place called the College: and this day we saw eight persons delivered from the guilt of sin. Thursday, we preached at *Lane's* chapel: nothing remarkable happened here, only a woman was awakened, who found peace the next day. Friday, at Brother *Thomas Lane's*:  
four



four or five were converted here. The next afternoon, Brother O'Kelly and I parted: he went to Brother Moorings, in Surry-county, and on the Saturday and Sunday preached there, and above sixty souls were converted at those two meetings. Saturday, I expected, having hurt one of my legs, to have rested; but was solicited by Brother Richard Pond, to preach a funeral sermon over the grave of a child about eight days old: I rode there, but a fever fell into my leg, so that I could not stand; but I sat down, and enforced an exhortation on those words, *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.* I had a hundred hearers, fifty of whom were old professors, and out of the other fifty, the Lord spoke peace to thirty, before we broke up the meeting. The next day I rode to Lane's chapel, where Brother O'Kelly and I were the Thursday before-mentioned. Now the Lord was here of a truth. Some of the young children born at the funeral yesterday, and a few in distress, that did not obtain deliverance then, had got here before me, and kindled such a flame, that I could not be heard in the house; so I sat in a chair on a table in the wood, and exhorted from those words, *The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.* Above sixty souls were set at liberty this day in this place; blessed be GOD!

From this time, whilst I was going twice round my circuit, I think I did not preach three days following without having souls in a smaller or greater number converted. The flame is still among us, though not so rapid as it was six months past: yet the members of the society are as much alive as ever; but the power of GOD does not strike the wicked so frequently as it did, though, blessed be GOD, we have many awakenings, but the convinced do not get delivered so soon as they did at the beginning of the revival. I believe since the conference I have added to the society about seven hundred whites, and between three and four hundred blacks. About fourteen hundred (whites and blacks) were converted; but a great many of the poor blacks are not allowed to join us by their lordly masters. Yet, I bless GOD, the new-born we have in society, seem to

to stand stedfast. I think I have not yet lost above ten or twelve whites, out of all that I have joined.

I understand from Brother *Easter*, that they have added more in the *Brunswick*-circuit than we have in *Suffex*: and this blessed flame seems to run through *Virginia*, *North* and *South Carolina*, and *Georgia*: and I do not doubt but it will spread through the continent.

Indeed I cannot help believing but this glorious work, which the Lord is carrying on in *Virginia*, will spread to the utmost bounds of the earth; and, I trust, the happy period will soon commence, when all the kingdoms of the earth will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ.

I am, &c.

PHILIP COX.

## A L L E T T E R

*From Mr. Joseph Alleine to his Wife, concerning his Acceptance of Taunton.*

My dear heart,

**B**Y this time I hope thou hast received mine, touching *Taunton*. I find my heart much inclining that way. I will tell thee the principles upon which I go.

First, I lay this for a foundation, That a man's life consists not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth. It was accounted a wise prayer that *Agur* put up to be fed with food convenient for him. And certain it is, that where men have least of the world, they esteem it least, and live more by faith in GOD, casting their care and burden upon him. O the sweet breathing of *David's* soul! The strong actings of his faith, when his condition was low and mean! How fully did he rely upon GOD. And certainly could we that are unexperienced, but feel the thorns of those cares and troubles, that there are in gathering and keeping much, and the danger when riches increase, of setting our hearts upon them, we should prize the happiness of



of a middle condition. Doubtless, godliness with contentment is great gain. *Seekest thou great things for thyself?* (said the prophet to *Baruch*) *seek them not.* Certainly a good conscience is a continual feast, and enough for a happy life.

Secondly, I take this for an undoubted truth, that a drachm of grace is better than a talent of wealth; and therefore such a place where we had little to do with the world to take off our thoughts from the things of eternity, and had the advantage of abundance of means, and the daily opportunities of warming our hearts with the blessed society of christians, is (if we pass a true spiritual judgment) without comparison before another place, void of those spiritual advantages. Let us think, what though our purses may thrive better in a place of large maintenance; yet where are our souls like to thrive any way answerable to what they are in this? We shall have but little in the world, but what is this, if it be made up to us, in communion with GOD and his people? If we thrive in faith and love, humility and heavenly-mindedness, what matter is it, though we do not raise ourselves in the world? Oh! Who would leave so much grace, and so much comfort in communion with Christ and his saints, for the probabilities of living a little more handsomely? It is a strange thing to see how christians generally judge. What is it worth a year? Is the maintenance certain? What charges are there like to be? These are the questions we commonly ask first, when we speak of settling. But alas, though those things are to be considered too, yet, what good am I like to do? What good am I like to get? These should be the chief things we should judge by. What if we have but a little in the world? Why then we must keep but a short table, and give the meaner entertainment to our friends. O but will not this be abundantly made up, if we have more outward and inward peace? Let others hug themselves in their corn, and wine, and oil, in their fat livings, and their large tables, if we have more of the light of GOD's countenance, who would change with them?

Thirdly, That the surest way to have any outward mercy, is to be content to want it. When men's desires are

over-

over-eager after the world, they must have thus much a year, and a house well furnished, and wife, and children, thus and thus qualified, GOD doth, usually, break their wills by denying them, as one would cross a froward child of his stubborn humour: or else puts a sting into them, that a man had been as well without them. The best way to get riches, is out of doubt to set them lowest in one's desires. *Solomon* found it so: he did not ask riches but wisdom, but GOD was so pleased, that he threw in them into the bargain. Nothing sets GOD's mercies farther off than the want of free submission to want them. Certainly, GOD will never be behind hand with us. Let our care be to build *his* house, and let him alone to build *ours*.

Fourthly, That none ever was, or ever shall be, a loser by Jesus Christ. Many have lost much for him, but never did, never shall any lose by him. Take this for a certainty, whatsoever outward comforts we leave, or outward advantages, that we may glorify him in our services, and enjoy him in all his ordinances more than otherwise we could, we shall receive an hundred fold in this life. It is a sad thing to see how little Christ is trusted; men will trust him no farther than they can see him. Alas, hath he not a thousand ways, both outward and inward, to make up a little outward advantage to us? Have any ventured themselves upon him in his way, but he made good every promise to them? Let us therefore exercise our faith, and stay ourselves on the promise, and see if ever we are ashamed of our hope.

Fifthly, That what is wanting in the means, GOD will make up in the blessing. This I take for a certain truth, while a man commits himself and his affairs to GOD, and is in any way that GOD put him into: and if a man have but a little income, if he have a great blessing, that will make it up. Alas, we must not account of mercies by the bulk. What if another have a pound to my ounce, if mine be gold for his silver, I will never change with him. As it is not bread that keeps men alive, but the word of blessing that proceedeth out of the mouth of GOD; so it is not the largeness of the means, but the blessing of the Lord



that maketh rich. Oh! if men did but believe this, they would not grasp so much of the world as they do. Well, let others take their course, and we will take ours, to wait upon GOD by faith and prayer: let others toil to enlarge their income, we will pray GOD to enlarge our blessing, and I doubt not but we shall prove the gainers.

Sixthly, That every condition hath its snares and troubles, and therefore we may not expect to be without them wherever we be; only that condition is most eligible, that hath fewest and least. I cannot object any thing against the proposal of *Taunton*, but the meanness of the maintenance. And let us consider how inconsiderable this inconvenience is, in comparison of those we must reckon upon meeting with, if God cast us into another place. Upon these considerations, I find my heart much inclined to accept of their offer at *Taunton*. I beseech thee to weigh the matter, and tell me thy thoughts, and which way thy spirit inclines, for I have always resolved the place I settled in should be to thy content. I have been so large in delivering my judgment, that I must thrust up my affections into a corner. Well, though they have but a corner in my letter, I am sure they have room enough in my heart: but I must conclude; the Lord keep thee, my dear, and cherish thee for ever in his bosom. Farewel, mine own soul.

*I am, as ever, thine own Heart,*

JOS. ALLEINE.

OXON, *May 27, 1659.*

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### AN UNCOMMON MURDER.

A SHIP, named the *Earl of Sandwich*, sailed from London in *August, 1765*, for *Santa Cruz*; where discharging their cargo, they sailed to *Oratavo* and took in a cargo of wine, a large quantity of Spanish dollars, some

some ingots of gold, some jewels and gold-duft. With this cargo they failed for *London*, and had then on board *John Cockeran*, master; *Charles Pinchent*, mate; *James Pinchent*, mariner; *Benjamin Gallispy*, cabin-boy; captain *Glass*, his wife and daughter, with a boy belonging to them, were passengers; and moreover, *Peter M'Kinlie*, boat-swain; *George Gidley*, cook; *Richard St. Quinten*, and *Andrew Zekerman*, mariners.

The four last entered into a combination to murder every body on board, and possess themselves of the treasure. Accordingly, on the 30th of *November*, these four villains being stationed on the night-watch, the master coming on the quarter-deck to see every thing safe, was seized by *M'Kinlie*, and by *Gidley* knocked on the head with an iron bar, and thrown overboard. The captain's groans being heard by the two *Pinchents* and captain *Glass*, they came upon deck and were immediately attacked; the *Pinchents* were knocked down and thrown overboard, and captain *Glass* was killed with his own sword. The noise brought Mrs. *Glass* and her child upon deck, when beholding the scene, she implored their mercy; but *Zekerman* and *M'Kinlie* tossed them both into the sea, as they were locked in each other's arms.

Having thus dispatched all but the two boys, they altered their course, being then in the English Channel, and steered for the coast of *Ireland*; and on the 3d of *December* were about ten leagues from *Waterford*. Here they determined to hoist out a boat, and loading her with the treasure, to sink the ship together with the boys. This scheme they put into execution; one of the boys swam after the boat, came up with her, and laying his hand upon the gunwale, received a blow on the head from one of the ruffians, which obliged him to quit his hold, and he was drowned. Soon after the vessel, having her ballast-port opened, filled with water and overfet, and they saw the other boy washed overboard.

They now thought themselves secure, as the dead could tell no tales; and none could search the bottom of the sea for evidence. On landing, they buried the bulk of their wealth



wealth in the sand, amounting to two hundred and fifty bags of dollars. The remainder with the jewels and ingots of gold, they reserved for present use. But their prodigality made them remarkable wherever they went; and the ship which they had consigned to the bottom of the sea, floated on shore near *Waterford*. This occasioned much speculation, and suspicion pointed at the rogues who were living with great jollity at *Dublin*. Accordingly two gentlemen went from *Ross* (where the ship floated on shore) to *Dublin*; told their suspicions to the magistrates, and on the 9th of *December*, *Quinten* and *Zekerman* were apprehended; and being examined apart, each of them confessed the murders. They confessed also, that since their arrival in *Dublin*, *Gidley* and *M'Kinley* had sold dollars to a goldsmith to the amount of three hundred pounds. By means of this goldsmith, *M'Kinlie* was apprehended, and intelligence was got that *Gidley* had set out in a post-chaise on his way to *Cork*, in order to take ship for *England*. Two persons were dispatched, from *Dublin* to *Ross*, to direct a search to be made for the buried treasure: and these, on their return to *Dublin*, fell in with, and apprehended, *Gidley*. Thus were the workers of these atrocious deeds all brought to justice, although they had taken every precaution to sink and destroy whatever could disclose their guilt.

Poetry.

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## Poetry.

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### ON WINTER.

*Wrote some Time in Winter.*

**T**HE fun far southward bends his annual way,  
 The bleak north-east wind lays the forests bare,  
 The fruit ungather'd quits the naked spray,  
 And dreary winter reigns o'er earth and air.

No mark of vegetable life is seen,  
 No bird to bird repeats his tuneful call;  
 Save the dark leaves of some rude ever-green,  
 Save the lone red-breast on the moss-grown wall.

Where are the sprightly scenes by spring supply'd,  
 The may-flow'r'd hedges scenting every breeze;  
 The white flocks scatt'ring o'er the mountain-side,  
 The woodlark warbling on the blooming trees?

Where is gay summer's sportive insect-train,  
 That in green fields on painted pinions play'd?  
 The herd at morn wide-pasturing o'er the plain,  
 Or throng'd at noon-tide in the willow-shade?

Where is brown autumn's evening, mild and still,  
 What time the ripen'd corn fresh fragrance yields;  
 What time the village peoples all the hill,  
 And loud shouts echo o'er the harvest-fields?

To former scenes our fancy thus returns,  
 To former scenes, that little pleas'd when here!  
 Our winter chills us, and our summer burns,  
 Yet we dislike the changes of the year.

Who



Who dreams of nature free from nature's strife?  
Who dreams of constant happiness below?  
The hope-flush'd ent'rer on the stage of life;  
The youth to knowledge unchastis'd by woe.

For me, long toil'd on many a weary road,  
Led by false hope in search of many a joy;  
I find on earth's bleak clime no blest abode,  
No place, no season, sacred from annoy.

For me, while winter rages round the plains,  
With his dark days, I'll human life compare:  
Not those more fraught with clouds and winds and rains,  
Than this with pining pain and anxious care.

O whence this wond'rous turn of mind, our fate!  
Whate'er the season or the place posselt,  
We ever murmur at our present state;  
And yet the thought of parting breaks our rest.

Why else when heard in ev'ning's solemn gloom,  
Does the sad knell, that sounding o'er the plain  
Tolls some poor lifeless body to the tomb,  
Thus thrill my breast with melancholy pain?

The voice of reason echoes in my ear,  
Thus thou ere long must join thy kindred clay:  
No more this breast the vital spirit share,  
No more these eye-lids open on the day.

O winter, round me spread thy joyless reign,  
Thy threat'ning skies in dusky horrors drest;  
Of thy dread rage no longer I'll complain,  
Nor ask an EDEN for a transient guest.

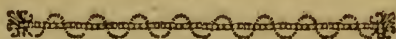
Enough has heav'n indulg'd of joy below,  
To tempt our tarriance in this lov'd retreat;  
Enough has heav'n ordain'd of useful woe,  
To make us languish for a happier seat.

There

There is, who deems all climes, all seasons fair;  
 There is, who knows no restless passion's strife;  
 Contentment, smiling at each idle care;  
 Contentment, thankful for the gift of life.

She finds in winter many a scene to please,  
 The morning landscape fring'd with frost-work gay,  
 The sun at noon seen through the leafless trees,  
 The clear, calm ether at the close of day.

She bids for all, our grateful praise arise  
 To him whose mandate spake the world to form;  
 Gave spring's gay bloom, and summer's cheerful skies,  
 And autumn's corn-clad field, and winter's sounding  
 storm.



#### A LETTER TO A CLERGYMAN.

**M**A Y these few lines with ardour wing their way,  
 And all the free, ingenuous friend display,  
 To a congenial soul some hints impart,  
 Cast off reserve, and pour forth all my heart.

Go, bid my friend an equal mind prepare,  
 To meet a fate propitious or severe.  
 If to his view gay, flatt'ring prospects rise,  
 Bid him not trust to changeeful summer-skies:  
 And if the world with hideous aspect frown,  
 And the fair crop of worldly hope is gone,  
 Bid him be strong, and all the Christian show;  
 Nor fly the cross, but clasp the friendly foe.

Still independent, does my friend disdain  
 To bend the knee to Mammon's crowded fane,  
 To statesmen cringe, and for preferment bow,  
 With abject meanness, infamously low?



Sure he disdains to live upon their smile,  
And oil his honest tongue with panegyric guile.

Go, ask what heavenly labours fill his day;  
Too wise to *dream* his useful life away,  
Conscious how fast time's headlong torrent runs,  
Does he improve his few remaining funs?  
To waiting souls proclaim the joyful news,  
And all around the precious balm diffuse:  
The joyful news of death and hell subdu'd,  
And glory purchas'd by a Saviour's blood?  
Art thou intent to make poor mortals rise  
From this low scene to scale the starry skies?  
Art thou all life, and fill'd with burning zeal,  
To save the sinking soul from the dire pangs of hell?  
To you th' important office is assign'd,  
To pour instruction on the sightless mind;  
Let all thy strength, let every nerve be ply'd,  
To save the souls for which the Saviour dy'd.

Let downy doctors, venerably dull,  
Their sleepy flock with soothing opiates lull;  
On Christ-debasing themes perversely dwell,  
And fear, to "*ears polite*, to mention hell."  
To gain the world, let them their heav'n resign,  
And fatten in the court's propitious shine;  
This be thy one concern, high Heav'n to please,  
Careless of man's vain censure or his praise.\*

\* The above lines were written to bishop *Coke* by a minister in the west of *England*, about fourteen years ago.

THE

## Arminian Magazine,

For MARCH 1790.



GOD's LOVE TO MANKIND. *Manifested by disproving his Absolute Decree for their Damnation.*

[Continued from page 56.]

**T**OUCHING the sacraments, this is also the use and end for which they were ordained; as we may see, *Luke vii. 30. But the pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of GOD against themselves, being not baptized of John.* In which words is evidently included, that it was GOD's purpose in *John's* baptism to bring them to Christ, and in him to heaven. So much also is said of his baptism, *Mark i. 4. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.* If this were the end of *John's*, much more was it the end of Christ's baptism; it being more excellent than *John's* was, not in substance, but in the fulness of grace administered by it. *All that have been baptized into Christ, saith the apostle, have been baptized into his death, Rom. vi. 3. All ye that have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, Gal. iii. 27.* The very phrases there used, shew that baptism is, in its original intention, an instrument of uniting men to Christ, and giving them communion with him in the benefits of his death. *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, saith our Saviour, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, John iii. 3. 5.*



I will shut up this with *Acts* ii. 38. *Repent and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins*; plainly implying, that therefore is baptism ordained to be received, that those who receive it, might have their sins remitted.

This is also GOD's intent in the Lord's supper. *This is my body, faith Christ, and this is my blood*, *Matt.* xxvi. 26. 28. In those words teaching us, that in that sacrament there is an exhibition of Christ and his benefits intended on GOD's part, and received of those by whom no obstacle is interposed; and therefore doth the apostle call it in express words, *1 Cor.* x. 16. *The communion of the body and blood of Christ*.

For this end also is the patience of GOD exercised among men, as we may see, *Rom.* ii. 4. *Despiseest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, not knowing that the mercy of GOD leadeth thee to repentance? But thou, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, heapest up wrath to thyself*. In these words may be noted, 1. GOD's intent in forbearing sins, which is, *the leading of men to repentance*, and so on to salvation: for repentance is by him ordained to salvation, as a means to the end. 2. The persons to whom GOD intendeth this good by his forbearance; and they are such as *despise the riches of his goodness*, and have *hard and impenitent hearts*. 3. The event of this their contempt of GOD's patience, and that is, *a treasuring up of wrath unto themselves against the day of wrath*. Out of all which, laid together, ariseth thus much; that GOD, by sparing wicked men, who have impenitent hearts, intendeth their everlasting good, though they, by the abuse of his patience, and by their refusal to repent, treasure up unto themselves wrath and misery everlasting.

The like to this is delivered in *2 Pet.* iii. 9. *The Lord is not slack, as some men count slackness, but patient towards us; that is, us men*. And why patient towards us? *Because he would have none to perish*. The end, therefore, of GOD's patience is man's salvation and repentance.

In the last place, those other gifts of GOD, by which men's understandings are enlightened and their souls beau-

tified

tified (namely, knowledge, fortitude, liberality, temperance, humility, chastity, and such like) are bestowed upon all that have them, among whom are many that prove reprobates in the end, that by the exercise of them, and continuance in them, they might come to eternal life.

That reprobates are adorned with many of these graces, appears by sundry scriptures, especially *Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6.* where the apostle saith, that *it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of GOD, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance.* The graces which the apostle here speaketh of, are not ordinary, but special and excellent graces; illumination, faith, a relish of GOD's word, and a taste of heaven; and the persons spoken of, are apostates, such as are under a possibility of falling away for ever (for upon a danger not possible cannot be built a solid exhortation) and consequently reprobates; and the thing intimated is, that upon apostates and reprobates are these excellent gifts many times bestowed. The like speech we have, *Heb. x. 26.* *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.* From whence we may collect, that men who sin willingly and unpardonably, may have received the knowledge of the truth; yea, and be sanctified by the blood of the testament and by the Spirit of grace, ver. 29.

*The unclean spirit may go out of a man,* Matt. xii. 43. *They may receive the word with joy,* Matt. xiii. 20. And many more excellent graces they may have besides. Now all these virtues and graces are not given them that they might abuse them, and so purchase to themselves the greater damnation; or that they might do good to others with them, but none to themselves: but rather, that, as by the former gifts of nature, so by these of grace they may obtain salvation. For if GOD aim at this in those gifts that are farther off, much more in these, which make those that have them, *not far from the kingdom of heaven.* My  
proof



proof for this, I borrow of our divines at the synod, who in their suffrage have these two positions :

1. " There are certain internal works preparing a man for justification, which, by the power of the word and Spirit, are wrought in the hearts of men not yet justified; such as are the knowledge of GOD's will, a sense of sin, and fear of punishment." This is their first.

2. Their second position is this: " Those whom GOD by his word and Spirit affecteth after this manner, those he truly and seriously calleth and inviteth to conversion."

Out of these two theses thus much ariseth, that GOD worketh the knowledge of his will, the sense of sin, fear of hell, hope of pardon, and consequently, many other excellent graces, in the hearts of men, that by these they may be converted, and so eternally saved.

We see, by these things, what end GOD aimeth at in his gifts to men.

But there are some scriptures that seem to say the contrary, namely, *Rom. i. 20.* where GOD is said to reveal himself to the Gentiles by the creatures, *that they might be without excuse.* And *Luke ii. 34.* Simeon saith of Christ, *that he is appointed for the falling and rising again of many in Israel.* And *1 Cor. i. 23.* *We preach Christ,* saith St. Paul, *to the Jews a stumbling-block.* *2 Cor. ii. 16.* *We are the savour of death unto death.* By these places it seemeth that GOD giveth these things to some, to make them stumble, and that they might be left without excuse. What shall we say, therefore, to these places?

Of all of them in general I may say, that they are to be understood of the end, which is many times effected by these gifts of GOD, and not of the end which is primarily intended in them; and they shew what Christ, the word preached, and the gifts of nature and grace, are *occasionally* to some men, through their voluntary rebellion against GOD, and not what they are *intentionally* in GOD's first thoughts and resolutions: he intendeth them for their good, though many times they receive them to their hurt. It is with GOD's gifts, and that very often too, as it is sometimes  
with

with physic: it is given by the physician for the patient's good; but many times, through the distemper of his body, it doth him hurt. And as it is with the sun, GOD intendeth by the shining of it, the enlightening and cheering of men and other creatures, yet some men are hurt by the light of it, others are scorched by the heat of it; accidentally, by reason of the climates wherein they live, or the ill-affect- edness of their eyes and bodies: So the blessings of GOD, which out of his abundant goodness are bestowed on men for their eternal good, through their ill temper of heart, effect their hurt, partly because of their wickedness, and partly because of the justice of GOD; who, as he hath an antecedent and gracious will to do men good; so he hath a consequent and judiciary will, of giving up obstinate men to their own hearts' lusts, and of permitting them to dash against Christ, and other means of life, and so to fall into endless misery; which made *Prosper* say, "They that have despised GOD's inviting will, shall feel his revenging will."

Now if this be the meaning of these scriptures, then do they not thwart that which hath been said of GOD's gracious intent of promoting the eternal good of men by his blessings bestowed upon them: for no sinful event is properly under GOD's decree, but under his prescience only, or at most under a permissive decree: and many things happen in the world which are beside the antecedent and principal purpose of GOD; not because there is any want of power in GOD, but because his will is often conditional, and therefore not effected, because the condition is not performed.

But by the opinion of absolute reprobation, the gifts both of nature and grace have another end: either GOD doth not mean them to those that perish, although they enjoy them, because they are mingled in the world with the elect, to whom only they are directed; or if he do, he meaneth they shall have them, and be lifted up by them above the common rank of men, that their fall may be the greater. And so much is said by the chief defenders of it. "GOD sendeth his word to reprobates," saith *Calvin*, "that they might be made more deaf; he setteth up a light before  
" them,



“ them, to make them the blinder ; he giveth them a remedy, that they might not be healed.” And, saith *Beza*, “ It should not seem absurd unto us, that GOD should offer his grace in the word and sacraments, not that they might be saved by it, but that they might be obnoxious to the forer punishment.” So *Maccovius*, “ Christ knocketh at the hearts of reprobates, who he knoweth neither can or will open unto him ; not that he may enter in, but partly that he may upbraid them for their impotency, and partly that he may increase their damnation.”

More particularly by this doctrine,

I. Christ came not into the world to procure the salvation of them that perish, because they were inevitably ordained to perish.

II. The word of grace is not sent to them : or if it be, it is sent that they might flight it or contemn it, and so increase their damnation by contemning it ; which being so, these inconveniencies will arise :

1. That GOD is a *mere deluder* of miserable men, whom he calleth to salvation in the name of his Son by the preaching of the word : for what else can he be, that pretendeth their good, whom he fully intendeth to ruin ?

2. That ministers are but false witnesses, because in their ministry they offer salvation conditionally to many, whose damnation is determined absolutely.

3. The ministry of the word cannot leave men without excuse : for reprobates may have this just plea ; “ Lord, dost thou punish us for not believing in thy Son, when thou didst call us to believe by the preaching of thy word ? Why ? Thou didst decree to leave us in *Adam's* sin ; to give us neither power to believe, nor a Christ to believe in. How canst thou justly charge us with sin, or increase our punishment for not believing in him, whom thou didst resolve, before the world was, that we should never believe in ?”

III. The sacraments also, by this opinion, signify nothing, seal nothing, confer nothing to such as are not saved ; but

but are mere blanks to them, not through the fault of the men, but by the primary and absolute will of GOD.

Lastly, GOD's other gifts which he bestoweth upon men, of what nature soever they be, are, to the most that receive them, in GOD's absolute intention,

1. *Unprofitable*, such as shall never do them good in reference to their eternal condition.

2. *Hurtful*; given them not out of love, but extreme hatred; not that they might use them well, and be blessed in so doing, but that they might use them ill, and by ill using of them procure to themselves the greater damnation. GOD lifteth them up, as the devil did Christ, to the pinnacle of the temple, that so they might fall; and loadeth them with knowledge and other goodly endowments, that with the weight of them he might sink them down to hell.

And so, by good consequence, GOD's choicest gifts are intended and used as snares to entrap men's souls. Men that have them, have little cause to be thankful for them or to love the giver of them, but to hate him rather; because they are but giftless gifts, of the same nature with a griping usurer's bounty, *Jaël's* courtesy, *Saul's* marrying of *Michal* to *David*, or a bait for a poor fish, which she swallowed with a hook to boot.

My fourth general reason against absolute reprobation is, it is a hindrance to piety: it is a doctrine that serveth greatly to discourage holiness, and encourage profaneness. It maketh ministers, by its natural import, negligent in their preaching, praying, and other services, which are ordained of GOD for the eternal good of his people. It maketh people careless in hearing, reading, praying, instructing their families, examining their consciences, fasting and mourning for their sins, and all other godly exercises. In a word, it cutteth asunder the very sinews of religion, and pulleth away the strongest inducements to a holy life. Therefore, it is no true and wholesome doctrine.

That



That it doth so, will appear by these reasons that follow.

I. It taketh away hope and fear; hope of attaining any good by godliness; fear of sustaining any hurt by wickedness: and so it taketh away two principal props of religion.

The reason may be resolved into these two branches:

1. Hope and fear uphold godliness. Were it not for these, it would come to ruin: by these are men strongly led on to virtue, and with-held from vice. Hope doth stir men up to begin, and strengthen them in the doing of any good action begun. By this hope of heaven did our Saviour stir up himself (as he was man) to *endure the cross, and despise the shame*, Heb. xii. 2. By this he heartened his disciples to do and to suffer for his sake, Matt. v. 11, 12, and x. 32. By this have all the godly, in all ages, encouraged themselves in well-doing, as we may see in general, Phil. iii. 20, 21. Col. i. 5. Tit. ii. 12, 13. And in particular, *Abraham* left his country and kindred at GOD's call, *because he looked for a city, whose builder and maker was GOD*, Heb. xi. 8, 9, 10. *Moses* left all the pleasures and treasures of Egypt, and endured afflictions with the people of GOD, *because he saw him that was invisible, and had respect to the recompence of reward*, ver. 25, 26, 27. The martyrs endured racks, gibbets, lions, sword, fire, with a world of other torments, *because they looked for a better resurrection*, ver. 35. *Paul* endeavoured always to keep a clear conscience, through the hope which he had of a blessed resurrection, Acts xxiv. 15, 16. All the noble and heroic acts of active and passive obedience, have sprung from the hope of eternal glory. Soldiers, merchants, husbandmen, all are whetted on by hope, to diligence in their callings, as daily experience sheweth us. The hope of heaven, therefore, is a great encouragement to piety.

[Continued to page 157.]

*The following discourse was written by our honoured friend John Wesley, above five and fifty years ago, for the use of his pupils at Oxford. It does not indeed strictly come within the letter of our engagements in the preface to the first volume of our magazine. But as it has never been published in America; and but lately in Europe, we will venture on one exception to our general rule.*

## S E R M O N XV.

*On LUKE xxii. 19.*

*Do this in remembrance of me.*

**I**T is no wonder that men who have no fear of GOD, should never think of doing this. But it is strange that it should be neglected by any that do fear GOD, and desire to save their souls: and yet nothing is more common. One reason why many neglect it is, they are so much afraid of *eating and drinking unworthily*, that they never think how much greater the danger is, when they do not eat or drink it at all. That I may do what I can to bring these well-meaning men to a more just way of thinking, I shall,

First, shew that it is the duty of every christian to receive the Lord's supper as often as he can; and secondly, answer some objections.

I. I am to shew, that it is the duty of every christian to receive the Lord's supper as often as he can.

1. The first reason why it is the duty of every christian so to do, is because it is a plain command of Christ. That this is his command, appears from the words of the text, *Do this in remembrance of me*: by which, as the apostles were obliged to bless, break and give the bread to all that joined with them in those holy things, so were all christians obliged to receive those signs of Christ's body and blood. Here therefore the bread and wine are commanded to be received, in remembrance of his death, to the end of the world.



Observe too, that this command was given by our Lord, when he was just laying down his life for our sakes. They are therefore, as it were, his dying words, to all his followers.

2. A second reason why every christian should do this, as often as he can, is because the benefits of doing it are so great, to all that do it in faith, and in obedience to him: namely, the forgiveness of our past sins, the present strengthening and refreshing of our souls. In this world we are never free from temptations. Whatever way of life we are in, whatever our condition be, whether we are sick or well, in trouble or at ease, the enemies of our souls are watching to lead us into sin. And too often they prevail over us. Now when we are convinced of having sinned against GOD, what surer way have we of procuring pardon from him, than the *shewing forth the Lord's death*? and beseeching him, for the sake of his Son's sufferings, to blot out all our sins?

3. The grace of GOD given herein, confirms to us the pardon of our sins, by enabling us to leave them. As our bodies are strengthened by bread and wine, so are our souls by these tokens of the body and blood of Christ. This is the food of our souls: this gives strength to perform our duty, and leads us on to perfection. If therefore we have any regard for the plain command of Christ, if we desire the pardon of our sins, if we wish for strength to believe, to love and obey GOD, then we should neglect no opportunity of receiving the Lord's supper. Then we must never turn our backs on the feast which our Lord has prepared for us. We must neglect no occasion which the good providence of GOD affords us for this purpose. This is the true rule; so often are we to receive, as GOD gives us opportunity. Whoever therefore does not receive, but goes from the holy table, when all things are prepared, either does not understand his duty, or does not care for the dying command of his Saviour, the forgiveness of his sins, the strengthening of his soul, and the refreshing it with the hope of glory.

4. Let

4. Let every one, therefore, who has either any desire to please GOD, or any love of his own soul, obey GOD, and consult the good of his own soul, by communicating every time he can : like the first christians, with whom the christian sacrifice was a constant part of the Lord's-day's service, and for several centuries they received it almost every day : four times a week always. Accordingly those that joined in the prayers of the faithful, never failed to partake of the blessed sacrament. What opinion they had of any who turned his back upon it, we may learn from that ancient canon, " If any believer join in the prayers of the faithful, and go away without receiving the Lord's supper, let him be excommunicated, as bringing confusion into the church of GOD."

5. In order to understand the nature of the Lord's supper, it would be useful carefully to read over those passages in the gospel, and in the first epistle to the Corinthians, which speak of the institution of it. Hence we learn that the design of this sacrament is the continual remembrance of the death of Christ, by eating bread and drinking wine, which are the outward signs of the inward grace, the body and blood of Christ.

6. It is highly expedient for those who purpose to receive this, whenever their time will permit, to prepare themselves for this solemn ordinance, by self-examination and prayer. But this is not absolutely necessary. And when we have not time for it, we should see that we have the habitual preparation which is absolutely necessary, and can never be dispensed with on any account, or any occasion whatever. This is, first, a full *purpose* of heart, to keep all the commands of GOD. And secondly, a sincere *desire*, to receive all his promises.

II. I am, in the second place, to answer the common objections against constantly receiving the Lord's supper.

1. I say, *constantly* receiving. For as to the phrase of *frequent* communion, it is absurd to the last degree. If it means any thing less than constant, it means more than can be proved to be the duty of any man. For if we are not obliged to communicate *constantly*, by what argument  
can



can it be proved, that we are obliged to communicate *frequently*? Yea, more than once a year, or once in seven years? or once before we die? Every argument brought for this, either proves that we ought to do it *constantly*, or proves nothing at all. Therefore that indeterminate, unmeaning way of speaking, ought to be laid aside by all men of understanding.

2. In order to prove that it is our duty to communicate constantly, we may observe that the holy communion is to be considered either, 1. As a command of GOD, or 2. As a mercy to man.

First, As a command of GOD. GOD, our Mediator and Governor, from whom we have received our life and all things, on whose will it depends, whether we shall be perfectly happy or perfectly miserable from this moment to eternity, declares to us, that all who obey his commands, shall be eternally happy; all who do not, shall be eternally miserable. Now one of these commands is, "*Do this in remembrance of me.*" I ask then, Why do you not do this, when you can do it if you will? When you have an opportunity before you, why do not you obey the command of GOD?

3. Perhaps you will say, "GOD does not command me to do this *as often as I can*:" that is, the words "as often as you can," are not added in this particular place. What then? Are we not to obey every command of GOD, as often as we can? Are not all the promises of GOD made to those, and those only, who *give all diligence*; that is, to those, who do all they can, to obey his commandments? Our power is the one rule of our duty. Whatever we can do, that we ought.

4. And this great truth, that we are obliged to keep every command as far as we can, is clearly proved from the absurdity of the contrary opinion: for were we to allow that we are not obliged to obey every commandment of GOD as often as we can, we have no argument left to prove that any man is bound to obey any command at any time. For instance, Should I ask a man, why he did

did not obey one of the plainest commands of GOD? Why, for instance, he does not help his parents? He might answer, "I will not do it now; but I will at another time." When that time comes, put him in mind of GOD's command again: and he will say, "I will obey it some time or other." Nor is it possible even to prove, that he ought to do it now, unless by proving that he ought to do it as often as he can: and therefore he ought to do it now, because he can if he will.

5. Consider the Lord's supper, secondly, as a mercy from GOD to man. As GOD, whose mercy is over all his works, and particularly over the children of men, knew there was but one way for man to be happy like himself, namely, by being like him in holiness: as he knew we could do nothing toward this of ourselves, he has given us certain means of obtaining his help. One of these is the Lord's supper, which of his infinite mercy he hath given for this very end, that through this means we may be assisted to attain those blessings which he hath prepared for us; that we may obtain holiness on earth and everlasting glory in heaven.

I ask then, why do you not accept of his mercy as often as ever you can? GOD now offers you his blessing: why do you refuse it? you have now an opportunity of receiving his mercy: why do you not receive it? You are weak: why do not you seize upon every opportunity of increasing your strength? In a word, considering this as a mercy, he that does not communicate as often as he can, has little wisdom.

6. These two considerations will yield a full answer to all the common objections, which have been made against constant communion: indeed to all that ever were or can be made. In truth nothing can be objected against it, but upon supposition, that this particular time, either the communion would be no mercy, or I am not commanded to receive it. Nay, should we grant it would be no mercy, that is not enough: for still the other reason would hold: whether it does you any good or none, you are to obey the command of GOD.

7. How-



7. However, let us see the particular excuses which men commonly make for not obeying it. The most common is, "I am *unworthy*; and *he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself*. Therefore I dare not communicate, lest I should eat and drink my own damnation."

The case is this. GOD offers you a great mercy, and commands you to accept it. Why do not you accept this mercy, in obedience to his command? You say, "I am unworthy to receive it." And what then? You are unworthy to receive any mercy from GOD. But is that a reason for refusing all mercy? GOD offers you a pardon for all your sins. You are unworthy of it, 'tis sure, and he knows it: but since he is pleased to offer it nevertheless, will not you accept of it? He offers to deliver your soul from death. You are unworthy to live. But will you therefore refuse life? He offers to endue your soul with new strength: because you are unworthy of it, will you deny to take it? What can GOD himself do for us farther, if we refuse his mercy, even because we are unworthy of it?

8. But suppose this were no mercy to us (to suppose which is indeed giving GOD the lie; saying, That is not good for man, which he purposely ordered for his good:) still I ask, Why do not you obey GOD's command? He says, "Do this." Why do you not? You answer, "I am unworthy to do it." What! Unworthy to obey GOD? Unworthy to do what GOD bids you do? Unworthy to obey GOD's command? What do you mean by this? That those who are unworthy to obey GOD, ought not to obey him? Who told you so? If he were even *an angel from heaven, let him be accursed*. If you think God himself has told you so by St. Paul, let us hear his words. They are these, *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself*.

Why, this is quite another thing. Here is not a word said of *being unworthy* to eat and drink. Indeed he does speak of eating and drinking *unworthily*: but that is quite a different thing: so he has told us himself. In this very  
chapter

chapter we are told, that by eating and drinking unworthily is meant, taking the holy sacrament in such a rude and disorderly way, that one was *hungry, and another drunken*. But what is that to *you*? Is there any danger of *your* doing so? Of your eating and drinking *thus unworthily*? However unworthy you are to communicate, there is no fear of your communicating thus. Therefore whatever the punishment is of doing it thus unworthily, it does not concern *you*. You have no more reason from this text to disobey GOD, than if there was no such text in the bible. If you speak of "eating and drinking unworthily" in the sense St. Paul uses the words, you may as well say, "I dare not communicate *for fear the church should fall*, as for fear I should *eat and drink unworthily*."

9. If then you fear bringing *damnation* on yourself by this, you fear where no fear is. Fear it not, for eating and drinking unworthily; for that in St. Paul's sense, ye cannot do. But I will tell you for what you shall fear damnation: for not eating and drinking at all: for not obeying your Maker and Redeemer: for disobeying his plain command: for thus setting at nought both his mercy and authority.

10. We see then how weak the objection is, "I dare not receive, because I am unworthy." Nor is it any stronger, though the reason why you think yourself unworthy is, that you have lately fallen into sin. It is true, those "who have done any grievous crime," ought not to receive without repentance. But all that follows from this is, That we should repent before we come; not that we should neglect to come at all.

To say, therefore, that "a man may turn his back upon the Lord's table, because he has lately fallen into sin; that he may impose this penance upon himself," is talking without any warrant from scripture. For where does the bible teach, to atone for breaking one commandment of GOD, by breaking another? What advice is this, "Commit a new act of disobedience, and GOD will more easily forgive the past!"

11. Others



11. Others there are, who to excuse their disobedience, plead, that they are unworthy in another sense: that they "cannot live up to it; they cannot pretend to lead so holy a life, as constantly communicating would oblige them to do." Put this into plain words. I ask, Why do not you accept the mercy which GOD commands you to accept? You answer, "Because I cannot live up to the profession I must make when I receive it." Then it is plain you ought never to receive it at all. For it is no more lawful to promise once what you know you cannot perform, than to promise it a thousand times. You know too, that it is one and the same promise, whether you make it every year or every day. You promise to do just as much, whether you promise ever so often or ever so seldom.

If therefore you cannot live up to the profession they make, who communicate once a week, neither can you come up to the profession you make, who communicate once a year. But cannot you indeed? Then it had been good for you that you had never been born. For all that you profess at the Lord's table, you must both profess and keep, or you cannot be saved. For you engage nothing there but this, That you will diligently keep his commandments. And cannot you keep up to this profession? Then you cannot enter into life.

12. Think then what you say, before you say, "You cannot live up to what is required of constant communicants." This is no more than is required of any communicants, yea, of every one that has a soul to be saved. So that to say, "You cannot live up to this," is neither better nor worse than renouncing christianity. It is in effect renouncing your baptism, wherein you solemnly entered into covenant, to keep all his commandments. You now fly from that engagement. You wilfully break one of his commandments, and to excuse yourself say, You cannot keep his commandments! then you cannot expect to receive the promises, which are made only to those that keep them.

13. What has been said on this pretence against constant communion, is applicable to those who say the same thing  
in

in other words, "We dare not do it, because it requires so perfect an obedience afterwards, as we cannot promise to perform." Nay, it requires neither more nor less perfect obedience, than you engaged in your baptism. You then entered into covenant to keep the commandments of GOD, by his help; and you promise no more when you communicate.

But observe upon the whole, this is not so properly an objection against constantly communicating, as against communicating at all. For if we are not to receive the Lord's supper till we are worthy of it, it is certain, we ought never to receive it.

14. A second objection which is often made against constant communion, is the having so much business as will not allow time for such a preparation as is necessary thereto. I answer, all the preparation that is absolutely necessary, is contained in these words, "Repent you truly of your sins past: have faith in Christ our Saviour." (And observe, that word is not here taken in its highest sense!) "Amend your lives, and be in charity with all men: So shall ye be meet partakers of these holy mysteries." All who are thus prepared, may draw near without fear, and receive the sacrament to their comfort. Now what business can hinder you from being thus prepared? From repenting of your past sins? From believing that Christ died to save sinners? From amending your lives, and being in charity with all men? No business can hinder you from this, unless it be such as hinders you from being in a state of salvation. If you resolve and design to follow Christ, you are fit to approach the Lord's table. If you do not design this, you are only fit for the table and company of devils.

15. No business therefore can hinder any man from having that preparation which alone is necessary, unless it be such as unprepares him for heaven, as puts him out of a state of salvation. Indeed every prudent man will, when he has time, examine himself before he receives the Lord's supper: whether he repents him truly of his former sins, whether he believes the promises of GOD, whether he fully designs



to walk in his ways, and be in charity with all men? In this, and in private prayer, he will doubtless spend all the time he conveniently can. But what is this to *you* who have not time? What excuse is this, for not obeying GOD? He commands you to come; and prepare yourself by prayer, as you have time; if you have not the time you wish to have, however come. Make not reverence to GOD's command a pretence for breaking it. Do not rebel against him, for fear of offending him. Whatever you do, or leave undone besides, be sure to do what GOD bids you do. Examining yourself, and using extraordinary private prayer before the Lord's supper, is good. But behold! *to obey is better than self-examination, and to hearken, than the prayer of an angel.*

16. A third objection against constant communion is, That it abates our reverence for the sacrament. Suppose it did. What then! Will you thence conclude, that you are not to receive it constantly? This does not follow. GOD commands you, "Do this." You may do it now, but will not: and to excuse yourself, say, "If I do it so often, it will abate the reverence with which I do it now." Suppose it did: has GOD ever told you; That when the obeying his command abates your reverence to it, then you may disobey it? If he has, you are guiltless; if not, what you say is just nothing to the purpose. The law is clear. Either shew that the lawgiver makes this exception, or you are guilty before him.

17. Reverence for the sacrament may be of two sorts: either such as is owing purely to the newness of the thing, such as men naturally have for any thing they are not used to: or such as is owing to our faith, or to the love or fear of GOD. Now the former of these is not properly a religious reverence, but purely natural. And this sort of reverence for the Lord's supper, the constantly receiving of it must lessen. But it will not lessen the true religious reverence, but rather confirm and increase it.

18. A fourth objection is, "I have communicated constantly so long, but I have not found the benefit I expected."

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This has been the case with many well-meaning persons, and therefore deserves to be particularly considered. And consider this, first. Whatever GOD commands us to do, we are to do, because he commands, whether we feel any benefit thereby or no. Now GOD commands, *Do this in remembrance of me.* This therefore we are to do, because he commands: whether we find present benefit thereby or not. But undoubtedly we shall find benefit sooner or later, though perhaps insensibly. We shall be insensibly strengthened, made more fit for the service of GOD, and more constant in it. At least we are kept from falling back, and preserved from many sins and temptations: and surely this should be enough to make us receive this food as often as we can; though we do not presently feel the happy effects of it, as some have done, and we ourselves may, when GOD sees best.

19. It has been shewn, first, That if we consider the Lord's supper as a command of Christ, no man can have a due respect for that command, who does not receive it as often as he can: Secondly, That if we consider the institution of it, as a mercy to ourselves, no man who does not receive it as often as he can, has any pretence to christian-prudence: Thirdly, That none of the objections usually made, can be any excuse for that man, who does not at every opportunity obey this command, and accept this mercy.

20. It has been particularly shewn, first, that unworthiness is no excuse: because though in one sense we are all unworthy, yet none of us need be afraid of being unworthy in St. Paul's sense; of *eating and drinking unworthily*: Secondly, That the not having time enough for preparation, can be no excuse: since the only preparation which is absolutely necessary, is that which no business can hinder; nor indeed any thing on earth, unless so far as it hinders our being in a state of salvation: Thirdly, That its abating our reverence is no excuse: since he who gave the command, "Do this," no where adds, "unless it abates your reverence:" Lastly, That our not profiting by it is no excuse,



cuse, since it is our own fault, in neglecting that necessary preparation, which is in our own power. If those who have hitherto neglected it on any of these pretences, will lay these things to heart, they will, by the grace of GOD, come to a better mind, and never more forsake their own mercies.

OXON, Feb. 19, 1732.

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### AN EXTRACT

*Of the Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL.*

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1639.

[Continued from page 74.]

**F**INDING the same doubts return on *Tuesday*, I consulted the oracles of GOD again, and found much comfort from those words, *They which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.*

*Friday Nov. 3.* I preached at *St. Antholin's*. *Sunday, 5.* in the morning at *St. Botolph's Bishopgate*, in the afternoon at *Islington*, and in the evening to such a congregation as I never saw before, at *St. Clement's in the Strand*. As this was the first time of my preaching here, I suppose it is to be the last.

On *Wednesday* my brother and I went, at their earnest desire, to do the last good office to the condemned malefactors. It was the most glorious instance I ever saw, of faith triumphing over sin and death. One observing the tears run fast down the cheeks of one of them in particular, while his eyes were steadily fixed upwards, a few moments before he died, asked, "How do you feel your heart now?" He calmly replied, "I feel a peace, which I could not have believed to be possible. And I know it is the peace of GOD which passeth all understanding."

My brother took that occasion of declaring the gospel of peace to a large assembly of publicans and sinners. O

Lord

Lord GOD of my fathers accept even me among them, and cast me not out from among thy children!

In the evening, I proclaimed mercy to my fellow-sinners at *Basing-shaw* church: and the next morning at *St. Antholin's*. *Friday* 10. I set out, and *Saturday* 11. spent the evening with a little company at *Oxford*. I was grieved to find *prudence* had made them leave off singing psalms. I fear it will not stop here. GOD deliver me and all that seek him in sincerity, from what the world calls *Christian prudence*!

*Sunday* 12. I preached twice at the *Castle*. In the following week, I began more narrowly to inquire what the doctrine of the church of *England* is, concerning the much controverted point of justification by faith. And the sum of what I found in the homilies I extracted and printed for the use of others.

*Sunday* 19. I only preached in the afternoon at the *Castle*. On *Monday* night I was greatly troubled in dreams, and about eleven o'clock waked in an unaccountable consternation, without being able to sleep again. About that time (as I found in the morning) one who had been designed to be my pupil, but was not come into the porter's lodge (where several persons were sitting) with a pistol in his hand. He presented this as in sport, first at one, and then at another. He then attempted twice or thrice to shoot himself, but it would not go off. Upon his laying it down, one took it up and blew out the priming. He was very angry, went and got fresh prime, came in again, sat down, beat the flint with his key; and about 12, pulling off his hat and wig, said, "He would die like a gentleman," and shot himself through the head.

*Thursday* 23. Returning from preaching at the *Castle*, I met once more with my old companion in affliction, *C. D.* who stayed with me till *Monday*. His last conversation with me, was as follows:

"In this you are better than you was at *Savannah*. You know that you was then quite wrong. But you are not right yet. You know that you was then blind, but you do not see now.

"I doubt



"I doubt not but GOD *will* bring you to the right foundation. But I have no hope for you, while you are on your present foundation. It is as different from the true, as the right hand from the left. You have all to begin anew.

"I have observed all your words and actions, and I see you are of the same spirit still. You have a simplicity. But it is a simplicity of your own. It is not the simplicity of Christ. You think you do not trust in your own works. But you do trust in your own works. You do not believe in Christ.

"You have a present freedom from sin. But it is only a temporary suspension of it, not a deliverance from it. And you have a peace. But it is not a true peace. If death were to approach, you would find all your fears return.

"But I am forbid to say any more. My heart sinks in me like a stone."

I was troubled. I begged of GOD an answer of peace, and opened on those words, *As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy and upon the Israel of GOD.* I was asking in the evening, that GOD would fulfil all his promises in my soul, when I opened my testament on those words, *My hour is not yet come.*

*Sunday Dec. 3.* I began reading prayers at Bocardo (the city-prison) which had been long discontinued. In the afternoon I received a letter, earnestly desiring me, to publish my account of *Georgia*: and another as earnestly dissuading me from it, "because it would bring much trouble upon me." I consulted GOD in his word, and received two answers; the first *Ezek. xxxiii. 2. 6.* The other, *Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

*Tuesday Dec. 5.* I began reading prayers and preaching in Gloucester-Green workhouse, and on *Thursday* in that belonging to St. Thomas's parish. On both days I preached at the *Castle*. At St. Thomas's was a young woman, raving mad, screaming and tormenting herself continually. I had a strong desire to speak to her. The moment I began she was still. The tears ran down her cheeks all the time I was telling

ling her, "Jesus of *Nazareth* is able and willing to deliver you." O where is faith upon earth? Why are these poor wretches left under the open bondage of Satan? Jesus, Master! give thou medicine to heal their sickness: and deliver those who are now also vexed with unclean spirits!

About this time, being desirous to know how the work of GOD went on among our brethren at *London*, I wrote to many of them concerning the state of their souls. One or two of their answers I have subjoined.

*My Dear Friend, whom I love in the Truth,*

I Know my Saviour's voice, and my heart burns with love and desire to follow him in the regeneration. I have no confidence in the flesh. I loath myself and love him only. My dear brother, my spirit even at this moment rejoices in GOD my Saviour, and the love which is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost destroys all self-love, so that I could lay down my life for my brethren. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and have confidence towards GOD, that through his blood my sins are forgiven. He hath begotten me of his own will, and saves me from sin, so that it has no dominion over me. His Spirit bears witness with my spirit, that I am his child by adoption and grace. And this is not for works of righteousness which I have done. For I am his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works: so that all boasting is excluded. It is now about 18 years since Jesus took possession of my heart. He then opened my eyes and said unto me, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. My dear friend, bear with my relating, after what manner I was born of GOD. It was an *instantaneous* act. My whole heart was filled with a divine power, drawing all the faculties of my soul after Christ, which continued three or four nights and days. It was as a mighty rushing wind, coming into the soul, enabling me from that moment to be more than conqueror, over those corruptions which before I was always a slave to. Since that time, the whole bent of my will hath been towards him day and



and night, even in my dreams. I know that I dwell in Christ, and Christ in me; I am bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. That you, and all that wait for his appearing, may find the consolation of *Israel*, is the earnest prayer of

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

W. F.

*My most Dear and Honoured Father in Christ.*

**I**N the 20th year of my age, 1737, GOD was pleased to open my eyes, and to let me see that I did not live as became a child of GOD. I found my sins were great, (though I was what they call a sober person) and that GOD kept an account of them all. However I thought, if I repented, and led a good life, GOD would accept me. And so I went on for about half a year, and had sometimes great joy. But last winter, I began to find, that whatever I did was nothing. My very tears I found were sin, and the enemy of souls laid so many things to my charge, that sometimes I despaired of heaven. I continued in great doubts and fears, until *April 9*, when I went out of town. Here for a time I was greatly transported, in meditating and seeing the glorious works of GOD: but in about three weeks I was violently assaulted again. GOD then offered a Saviour to me, but my self-righteousness kept me from laying hold on him.

On *Whitsunday*, I went to receive the blessed sacrament, but with a heart as hard as a stone. Heavy laden I was indeed, when GOD was pleased to let me see a crucified Saviour. I saw there was a fountain opened in his side for me to wash in and be clean. But alas! I was afraid to venture, fearing I should be too presumptuous. And I know, and am sure, I at that time refused the atonement which I might then have had. Yet I received great comfort. But in about nine days time, my joy went out, as a lamp does for want of oil, and I fell into my old state, into a state of damnation. Yet I was not without hope; for ever after that time I could not despair of salvation: I had so clear a sight of the fountain opened in the side of our Lord. But still  
when

when I thought of death, or the day of judgment, it was a great terror to me. And yet I was afraid to venture to lay all my sins upon Christ.

This was not all. But whenever I retired to prayer, I had a violent pain in my head. This only seized me, when I began to pray earnestly, or to cry out aloud to Christ. But when I cried to him against this also, he gave me ease. Well, I found GOD did love me, and did draw me to Christ. I hungered and thirsted after him, and had an earnest desire to be clothed with his righteousness. But I was still afraid to go boldly to Christ, and to claim him as my Saviour.

*July 3.* My dear sister came down to see me. She had received the atonement on St. Peter's day. I told her, I thought Christ died for *me*, but as to the assurance she mentioned, I could say nothing.

*July 5.* She went. That night I went into the garden, and considering what she had told me, I saw him by faith, whose eyes are as a flame of fire; him who justifieth the ungodly. I told him I was ungodly, and it was for *me* that he died. His blood did I plead with great faith, to blot out the hand-writing that was against me. I told my Saviour, that he had promised to give rest to all that were heavy laden. This promise I claimed; and I saw him by faith stand condemned before GOD in my stead. I saw the fountain opened in his side. I found, as I hungered, he fed me; as my soul thirsted, he gave me out of that fountain to drink. And so strong was my faith, that if I had had all the sins of the whole world laid upon me, I knew and was sure one drop of his blood was sufficient to atone for all. Well, I cleave unto him, and he did wash me in his blood. He hath clothed me with his righteousness, and has presented me to his father and my father, to his GOD and my GOD, a pure, spotless virgin, as if I had never committed any sin. It is on Jesus I stand, the Saviour of sinners. It is he that hath loved *me*, and given himself for *me*. I cleave unto him, as my surety, and he is bound to pay GOD the debt. While I stand on this rock, I am sure the gates



of hell cannot prevail against me. It is by faith that I am justified, and have peace with GOD through him. His blood has made reconciliation to GOD for me. It is by faith I have received the atonement. It is by faith that I have the Son of GOD, and the Spirit of Christ dwelling in me. And what then shall separate me from the love of GOD which is in Christ Jesus my Lord?

You must think what a transport of joy I was then in, when I that was lost and undone, dropping into hell, felt a Redeemer come, who is *mighty to save, to save unto the uttermost*. Yet I did not receive the witness of the Spirit at that time. But in about half an hour, the devil came with great power to tempt me. However, I minded him not, but went in and lay down pretty much composed in my mind. Now St. Paul says, *After ye believed, ye were sealed with the Spirit of promise*. So it was with me. After I had believed on him that *justifieth the ungodly*, I received that seal of the Spirit, which is the *earnest of our inheritance*. But at that time I did not know any thing of this. My sins were forgiven: but I knew I was not yet born of GOD.

July 6. In the morning, being by myself, I found the work of the Spirit was very powerful upon me (although you know GOD does not deal with every soul in the same way.) As my mother bore me with great pain, so did I feel great pain in my soul in being born of GOD. Indeed I thought the pains of death were upon me; and that my soul was then taking leave of the body. I thought I was going to him whom I saw with strong faith standing ready to receive me. In this violent agony I continued about four hours: and then I began to feel the *Spirit of GOD bearing witness with my spirit, that I was born of GOD*. Because I was a child of GOD, he sent forth the Spirit of his Son into me, crying *Abba, Father*. For that is the cry of every new-born soul. O mighty, powerful, happy change! I who had nothing but devils ready to drag me to hell, now found I had angels to guard me to my reconciled Father, and my Judge; who just before stood ready to condemn me, but was now become my righteousness. But I cannot express what GOD hath done  
for

for my soul. No; this is to be my everlasting employment, when I have put off this frail, sinful body, this corrupt, hellish nature of mine; when I join with that great multitude which no man can number, in singing praises to the Lamb that loved us, and gave himself for us! O how powerful are the workings of the Almighty in a new-born soul! The love of GOD was shed abroad in my heart, and a flame kindled there, with pains so violent, yet so very ravishing, that my body was almost torn asunder. I loved. The Spirit cried strong in my heart. I sweated. I trembled. I fainted. I sung. I joined my voice with those that excel in strength. My soul was got up into the Holy Mount. I had no thoughts of coming down again into the body, I who not long before had called to the rocks to fall on me, and the mountains to cover me, could now call for nothing else but *come, Lord Jesus, come quickly*. Then I could cry out with great boldness, There, O GOD, is my surety! There, O death, is thy plague! There, O grave, is thy destruction! There, O Serpent, is the seed that shall for ever bruise thy head. O I thought my head was a fountain of water! I was dissolved in love. *My beloved is mine, and I am his*. He has all charms. He has ravished my heart. He is my comforter, my friend, my all. He is now in his garden, feeding among the lilies. *O I am sick of love!* He is altogether lovely, *the chiefest among ten thousand*. O how Jesus fills, Jesus extends, Jesus overwhelms the soul in which he dwells!

[Continued at page 176.]

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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[Continued from page 84.]

7. “**F**OR about this time the Countess of Huntingdon erected a seminary at Trevecka, in Wales, in order to educate pious young men, of whatever denomination,



tion, for the ministry. She proposed to admit only such as were converted to GOD, and resolved to dedicate themselves to his service. They were at liberty to stay there three years: during which they were to have their education gratis, with every necessary of life, and a suit of clothes once a year: afterwards those who desired it might enter into the ministry, either in the established church of *England*, or among protestants of any other denomination. From the high opinion which the Countess had of Mr. *Fletcher's* piety, learning, and abilities for such an office, she invited him to undertake the direction of that seminary. Not that he could promise to be chiefly resident there; much less constantly. His duty to his own flock at *Madeley*, would by no means admit of this. But he was to attend as often as he conveniently could; to give advice with regard to the appointment of masters, the admission or exclusion of students; to oversee their studies and conduct: to assist their piety, and judge of their qualifications for the work of the ministry.

8. "As Mr. *Fletcher* greatly approved of the design, especially considering, first, That none were to be admitted but such as feared GOD: and secondly, That when they were prepared for it, they might enter into the ministry, wherever Providence opened a door: he readily complied with the invitation, and undertook the charge. This he did without fee or reward, from the sole motive of being useful in the most important work of training up persons for the glorious office of preaching the gospel. And some months after, with the same view, through his means and in consequence of your recommendation to her Ladyship, I was made head master of the school, or as it was commonly called, the college: though I could very ill be spared from *Kingswood*, where I had acted in that capacity about four years.

9. "As yet I was greatly wanted at *Kingswood*. I had likewise a term to keep at *Oxford*: so that I could only pay them a short visit in January, 1770. But in spring I went to reside there. And for some time things went on  
excellently

excellently well. The young men were serious, and made a considerable progress in learning. And many of them seemed to have a talent for preaching. Mr. *Fletcher* visited them frequently, and was received as an angel of GOD. It is not possible for me to describe the veneration in which we all held him. Like *Elijah* in the schools of the prophets, he was revered; he was loved; he was almost adored: and that not only by every student, but by every member of the family. And indeed he was worthy. Forgive me, my dear sir, if you think I exceed. My heart kindles while I write. Here it was that I saw, shall I say, an angel in human flesh? I should not far exceed the truth if I said so. But here I saw a descendant of fallen *Adam*, so fully raised above the ruins of the fall, that though by the body he was tied down to earth, yet was his whole conversation in heaven: yet was his life, from day to day, hid with Christ in GOD. Prayer, praise, love and zeal, all ardent, elevated above what one would think attainable in this state of frailty, were the element in which he himself continually lived. And as to others, his one employment was, to call, entreat and urge them, to ascend with him to the glorious source of being and blessedness. He had leisure comparatively for nothing else. Languages, arts, sciences, grammar, rhetoric, logic, even divinity itself, as it is called, were all laid aside, when he appeared in the school-room among the students. His full heart would not suffer him to be silent. He *must* speak, and they were readier to hearken to this servant and minister of Jesus Christ, than to attend to *Sallust*, *Virgil*, *Cicero*, or any Latin or Greek historian, poet or philosopher they were reading. And they seldom hearkened long, before they were all in tears, and every heart caught fire from the flame that burnt in his soul.

10. "These seasons generally terminated in this. Being convinced that to be *filled with the Holy Ghost* was a better qualification for the ministry of the gospel, than any classical learning, (though that too may be useful in its place.) After speaking a while in the school-room, he used frequent-



ly to say, "As many of you as are athirst for this fulness of the spirit, follow me into my room." On this, many of us have instantly followed him, and there continued till noon, wrestling like *Jacob* for the blessing, praying one after another, till we could bear to kneel no longer. This was not done once or twice, but many times. And I have sometimes seen him on these occasions, once in particular, so filled with the love of GOD, that he could contain no more, but cried out, "O my GOD, withhold thy hand, or the vessel will burst." But he afterwards told me, he was afraid he had grieved the Spirit of GOD; and that he ought rather to have prayed, that the Lord would have enlarged the vessel, or have suffered it to break, that the soul might have no farther bar or interruption to its enjoyment of the supreme good."

[This is certainly a just remark. The proper prayer on such an occasion would have been,

Give me the enlarg'd desire,  
And open, Lord, my soul,  
Thy own fulness to require,  
And comprehend the whole!

Stretch my faith's capacity  
Wider, and yet wider still;  
Then with all that is in thee  
My ravish'd spirit fill!]

11. "Such was the ordinary employment of this man of GOD, while he remained at *Trevecka*. He preached the word of life to the students and family, and as many of the neighbours as desired to be present. He was *instant in season, out of season*; he *reproved, rebuked, exhorted with all long-suffering*. He was always employed, either in discovering some important truth, or exhorting to some neglected duty, or administering some needful comfort, or relating some useful anecdote, or making some profitable remark or observation upon any thing that occurred. And his devout soul, always burning with love and zeal, led him to intermingle

intermingle prayer with all he said. Meanwhile his manner was so solemn, and at the same time so mild and insinuating, that it was hardly possible for any who had the happiness of being in his company, not to be struck with awe and charmed with love, as if in the presence of an angel, or departed spirit. Indeed I frequently thought, while attending to his heavenly discourse and divine spirit, that he was so different from, and superior to the generality of mankind, as to look more like *Moses* or *Elijah*, or some prophet or apostle come again from the dead, than a mortal man, dwelling in a house of clay. It is true, his weak and long-afflicted body proclaimed him to be human. But the graces which so eminently filled and adorned his soul, manifested him to be divine. And long before his happy spirit returned to GOD that gave it, that which was human seemed in a great measure to be *swallowed up of life*. O what a loss did *Trevecka* sustain! what an irreparable loss, when he left it!

12. "But why then did he leave it? Why did he give up an office, for which he was so perfectly well qualified? which he executed so entirely to the satisfaction of all the parties with whom he was concerned, and in which it had pleased GOD to give so manifest a blessing to his labours? Perhaps it would be better, in tenderness to some persons, eminent for piety and usefulness, to let that matter remain still under the veil, which forgiving love has cast over it. But if it be thought that justice to his character, and to the cause which from that time he so warmly espoused and so ably defended, requires some light to be cast upon it, it may be the most inoffensive way, to do it in his own words."

[It will be proper to observe here, for the better understanding of the following letter, that some time before Mr. *Fletcher* quitted *Trevecka*, Mr. *Benson* had been discharged from his office there: not for any defect of learning or piety, or any fault found with his behaviour: but wholly and solely, because he did not believe the doctrine of absolute predestination.]



13. "The following is an exact account of all that is material, in a letter he wrote to me, in consequence of my dismissal from the office I had been in.

June 7, 1771.

"Dear Sir,

"The same post brought me yours, and two from my lady, and one from Mr. *Williams*, [the new master.] Those contained no charges but general ones, which with me go for nothing. If the procedure you mention is fact, and your letter is a fair account of the transaction and words relative to your discharge, a false step has been taken. I write this post to her ladyship on the affair, with all possible plainness. If the plan of the college is overthrown, I have nothing more to say to it. I will keep to my text, for one: I trust I shall ever be a servant of all: the confined tool of any one party, I never was, and never will be. If the blow that should have been struck at *the dead spirit*, is struck (contrary to the granted *liberty of sentiment*) at *dead Arminius*, or *absent Mr. Wesley*—If a master is turned away without any fault: it is time for me to stand up with firmness, or to withdraw."

14. "The following paragraphs are transcribed from Mr. *Fletcher's* letter to my lady.

"Mr. *Benson* made a very just defence when he said, He did hold with me the possibility of salvation for all men. If this is what you call Mr. *Wesley's* opinion and Arminianism, and if "every Arminian must quit the college," I am actually discharged. For in my present view of things, I must hold that sentiment, if I believe that the bible is true, and that GOD is love.

"For my part, I am no party-man. In the Lord I am your servant, and that of your every student. But I cannot give up the honour of being connected with my old friends, who notwithstanding their failings, are entitled to my respect, gratitude and affection. Mr. *Wesley* shall always be welcome to my pulpit, and I shall gladly bear my testimony, in his as well as Mr. *Whitefield's*. If you forbid

bid your students to preach for the one, and offer them to preach for the other; and if a master is discarded for believing, that Christ died for all: then prejudice reigns; charity is cruelly wounded; and party-spirit shouts, prevails, triumphs."

15. "Two days after," continues Mr. *Benson*, "he writes, 'I am determined to stand or fall with the liberty of the college. As I entered it a free place, I must quit it the moment it is an harbour for party-spirit.'

"This he was soon constrained to do, as appears from the following letter, wrote about two months after.

"*My dear friend,*

"On my arrival at the college, I found all very quiet, I fear through the enemy's keeping his goods in peace. While I preached the next day, I found myself as much shackled as ever I was in my life. And after private prayer, I concluded I was not in my place. The same day I resigned my office to my lady, and on Wednesday to the students and the Lord.

"Mr. *Shirley* has sent my lady a copy of part of the minutes of the last conference, [viz. of the year 1770.] They were called *horrible* and *abominable*. My lady told me, "She must *burn* against them: and that whoever did not fully disavow them must quit the college." She accordingly ordered the master and all the students to write their sentiments upon them without reserve. I did so: explained them according to Mr. *Wesley's* sentiments; and approved the doctrine, though not cautiously worded. I concluded by observing, that as after such a step on my part, and such a declaration on my lady's, I could no longer as an honest man stay in the college, I took my leave of it: wishing my lady might find a minister to preside over it less insufficient than

JOHN FLETCHER."

16. "These were his reasons for resigning his charge at *Trevecka*. As the *circular letter* now went abroad, under



the name of Mr. *Shirley*, inviting the clergy of all denominations to assemble in a body at *Bristol*, to oppose you and the preachers met in conference, and oblige you to revoke the *dreadful heresies* contained in those minutes: and as Mr. *Fletcher* thought the churches throughout christendom to be verging very fast toward Antinomianism: he thought the propositions contained in those minutes ought rather to be confirmed than revoked. And as he was now retired to his parish, he had more leisure for such a work than before. So after much prayer and consideration, he determined to write in defence of them. In how able a manner he did this, I need not tell any that have read those incomparable writings. I know not how to give the character of them better, than in the words of Dr. *D-----*, to whom I sent Mr. *Fletcher's* checks, with a recommendatory letter. He answered me,

*Dear Sir,*

When I first read yours, I must own, I suspected your friendship for Mr. *Fletcher* had made you too lavish in your commendation of his writings: and that when I came to read them, I should find some abatements necessary to be made. But now I have read them, I am far from thinking you have spoken extravagantly; or indeed, that too much can be said in commendation of them. I had not read his first letter, before I was so charmed with the spirit, as well as abilities of the writer, that the gushing tear could not be hindered from giving full testimony of my heart-felt satisfaction. Perhaps some part of this pleasure might arise from finding my own sentiments so fully embraced by the author. But sure I am, the greatest share of it arose from finding those benevolent doctrines so firmly established; and that with such judgement, clearness, and precision, as are seldom, very seldom to be met with. What crowns the whole is, the amiable and christian temper, which those who will not be convinced, must however approve, and wish that their own doctrines "may be constantly attended with the same spirit."

17. How much good has been occasioned by the publication of that *circular letter*! This was the happy occasion of Mr. *Fletcher*'s writing those "checks to Antinomianism:" in which one knows not which to admire most, the *purity* of the language, (such as scarce any foreigner wrote before;) the *strength* and *clearness* of the argument; or the *mildness* and *sweetness* of the spirit that breathes throughout the whole. Inasmuch that I nothing wonder at a serious clergyman, who being resolved to live and die in his own opinion, when he was pressed to read them, replied, "No, I will never read Mr. *Fletcher*'s checks: for if I did, I should be of his mind."

18. A short extract from another of his letters, will shew what was his state of mind at this crisis. "How much water, says he, may at last rush out from a little opening? What are our dear L—'s jealousies come to? Ah poor college! Their conduct, among other reasons, has stirred me up to write in defence of the minutes. Methinks I dream, when I reflect, I have wrote controversy—the last subject I thought I should meddle with. I expect to be roughly handled on the account. Lord, prepare me for every thing thou callest me to!

J. F."

## C H A P. V.

*From his leaving Trevecka, to his going to Bristol.*

1. **T**HE frequent journies he took to and from *Trevecka*, while he presided over the college, in all weathers, and at all seasons of the year, farther impaired the firmness of his constitution. And in some of those journies, he had not only difficulties, but dangers likewise to encounter. One day, as he was riding over a wooden bridge, just as he got to the middle thereof it broke in. The mare's fore-legs sunk into the river, but her breast and hinder parts were kept up by the bridge. In that position she lay, as still as if she had been dead, till he got over her neck, and took off his bags, in which were several manuscripts,



scripts, the spoiling of which would have occasioned him much trouble. He then endeavoured to raise her up; but she would not stir, till he went over the other part of the bridge. But no sooner did he set his foot upon the ground, than she began to plunge. Immediately the remaining part of the bridge broke down, and sunk with her into the river. But presently she rose up again, swam out, and came to him.

2. About this time, Mr. *Pilmoor* being desirous to see the inside of a coal-pit, Mr. *Fletcher* went with him to the bottom of a sloping pit, which was supposed to be near a mile under the ground. They returned out of it without any inconvenience. But the next day, while several colliers were there, a damp took fire, which went off with a vast explosion, and killed all the men that were in it.

3. In February 1773, I received from him the following letter:

*Reverend and dear Sir,*

I hope the Lord, who has so wonderfully stood by you hitherto, will preserve you to see many of your sheep, and me among them, enter into rest. Should Providence call you first, I shall do my best, by the Lord's assistance, to help your brother to gather the wreck, and keep together those who are not absolutely bent to throw away the Methodist doctrines and discipline, as soon as he that now letteth is removed out of the way. Every help will then be necessary, and I shall not be backward to throw in my mite. In the mean time you sometimes need an assistant to serve tables, and occasionally to fill up a gap. Providence visibly appointed *me* to that office, many years ago. And though it no less evidently called me hither, yet I have not been without doubt, especially for some years past, whether it would not be expedient, that I should resume my office as your deacon; not with any view of presiding over the Methodists after you; but to ease you a little in your old age, and to be in the way of recovering, and perhaps of doing more good. I have sometimes thought, how  
shameful

shameful it was, that no clergyman should join you, to keep in the church the work GOD has enabled you to carry on therein. And as the little estate I have in my own country is sufficient for my maintenance, I have thought I would one day or other, offer you and the Methodists my free service. While my love of retirement made me linger, I was providentially led to do something in Lady *Huntingdon's* plan. But being shut out there, it appears to me, I am again called to my first work. Nevertheless I would not leave this place, without a fuller persuasion that the time is *quite* come. Not that GOD uses me much here, but I have not yet sufficiently cleared my conscience from the blood of all men. Meantime I beg the Lord to guide me by his counsel, and to make me willing to go any where, or no where, to be any thing, or nothing.

Help by your prayers, till you can bless by word of mouth,

Reverend and dear Sir,

Your willing, though unprofitable servant in the gospel,

Madeley, Feb. 6, 1773.

J. F.

[Continued at Page 183.]

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*The JOURNAL of FRANCIS ASBURY, Bishop of the  
Methodist-Episcopal Church.*

From March 26, 1772, to April 14, 1773.

[Continued from Page 90.]

**W**EDNESDAY 13. Preached at 3 o'clock, on, *Behold I stand at the door and knock.* Oh! what a time of satisfaction and power was this to my own soul. Went afterwards to Mr. *Taper's*, and many friends came at 8 o'clock. I was enabled to preach with life.

Thursday 14. Went to the new church. Surely the power of GOD is amongst this people. After preaching with great assistance, I lodged at *Isaac Jenkins's*, and in the  
morning



morning, he conducted me to *Gloucester*; and thence we went by water to *Philadelphia*. Here I found a change. Brother *Pilmore* was come; and the house was given up; which pleased me well, as it was a burden to the people. Brother *Pilmore* went to Mr. *Wallace's*, and I went to Mr. *Wilmer's*. On Friday night I was heavily afflicted; and dear sister *Wilmer* took great care of me. The next morning, through the mercy of GOD, I was something better; and preached in the evening.

Lord's day 17. After preaching in the morning, went to see *George Hungary*, who was near to eternity. He had peace in his soul.—Some slight me in this place, on account of my attention to discipline; and some drop off. But my work is to please GOD.

Tuesday 19. Went about 16 miles into the country, and preached at 11 o'clock, with energy of soul. A Presbyterian minister, who attended my preaching this morning, accompanied me part of the way back. We conversed, by the way, on the evidences of religion, the work of GOD, and sending out preachers.—This morning I arose with more spiritual strength, and felt a great desire to do the will of GOD with all purity of intention, desire and thought; that in all things GOD may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

Wednesday 20. Went to *Trentown*, but as the court was setting, was obliged to preach in a school-house, to but few people; and as there were foldiers in the town, I could hardly procure lodging.

Thursday 21. Preached on the other side of the river to a few simple people; and in the evening at *Burlington*, where the congregation was also small, on account of the fair.

Friday 22. In the morning rode home in great pain; but after dinner went 10 miles down the river.

Sunday 24. We rode down to *Greenwich*, where I preached at 10 o'clock, to near 300 people collected from different parts; we then rode back to friend *Price's* where we dined; and thence to *Gloucester*, which made near 15 miles. I preached there at 3 o'clock, to about 200 people, and then went up the river in a boat, to *Philadelphia*, where I preached at 7 o'clock.

Monday

Monday 25. Was unwell, but went to *Burlington*, and preached in the evening, though very sick.

Tuesday 26. Found myself very unwell in the morning; but visited a prisoner under sentence of death, and strove much to fasten conviction on his heart. Through the mercy of GOD, I hope the poor man was humbled.

Wednesday 27. Went to *New-mills*, where I preached at 4 o'clock; and again at 10 o'clock the next morning. In our lodgings we had much young company who had but little sense of religion.—Mrs. *Hewlings* went with me in a chair. I had many people, Baptists and others, though but little comfort in my own soul.

Friday 29. I preached under the gaol wall; and for the benefit of the prisoner, attended him to the place of execution. When he came forth, he roared like a bull in a net. He looked on every side, and shrieked for help; but all in vain. O how awful! Die he must. Doubtless, unprepared. I prayed with him and for him. How difficult it is (if I may use the term) to drench a hardened sinner with religion! I saw him tied up; and then stepping on a waggon, spoke a word in season, and warned the people to flee from the wrath to come, and improve the day of their gracious visitation, no more grieving the Spirit of GOD, lest a day should come, in which they may cry, and GOD may refuse to hear them. We then rode home to *Philadelphia*, where I exhorted in the evening, and found myself much more drawn out than I expected.

Lord's day 31. Preached morning and evening, with some life; but find that offences increase. However, I cannot help it. My way is, to go straight forward, and aim at what is right.

June 1. Preached this morning at 5 o'clock; and this day wrote to Mr. *Wesley*, and experienced a great degree of purity in my soul.

Tuesday 2. Rose this morning between 4 and 5, and was much quickened in preaching; then went to *Haddonfield*, about noon—Satan had almost gained an advantage over me  
this



this day: but the Lord helped and delivered me, for his mercy and truth's sake, and granted me life in my soul.

Wednesday 3. Preaching at 5 at *Manta* creek, was favoured with an opening and great power. After preaching there, about 100 people went to Mr. *Taper's*, 1 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles off. And there also I preached with life.

Thursday 5. At *Greenwich*, was weak in body, but had some liberty in preaching to about 200 willing people; but at *Gloucester*, preached to only a few dead souls, from this striking passage—*The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* I must observe, that in this journey I have been kept in peace and purity, and had more freedom, life and power, than I ever experienced in the city, or perhaps ever shall.

Saturday 6. Sailing 4 miles up the river, I came to *Philadelphia* in great comfort.

Lord's day, *June 7.* After preaching in the morning, was at the table with Mr. *Stringer*; and many felt the power of GOD, though I felt but little myself. We had a love-feast to-day, and many could testify that GOD was with us: several of our *Jersey*-friends spake of the power of GOD, with freedom.

Monday 8. With much disagreeable company, I set off for *Trentown*; where many felt the divine power accompanying the word preached.

Wednesday 10. After preaching on the other side of the river, I returned to *Philadelphia*, and preached in the evening.

Thursday 11. Set off in the stage for *Bristol*, and crossed the water to see a man suspected of murder; but found him very ignorant of things relating to his soul; I then returned to *Philadelphia* very unwell.

Friday 12. In the morning I was a little better, and rose to preach at 5 o'clock. The Lord was with me this day at intercession.

Saturday 13. Hitherto the Lord hath helped. Praised be his dear name!

Lord's

Lord's day, *June 14*. After preaching in the morning with some freedom of mind, went to *St. Paul's*, and afterwards spent the afternoon in my room; then preached and met the society in the evening; but felt great dryness, and was grieved to see so much conformity to the world, in the article of dress, among our people.

Tuesday 16. Set off for *Burlington*; and though weak and infirm, preached at night, with liberty.

Wednesday 17. I bent my course for *New-mills*; but still groan for more life, and want to be more holy.

Thursday 18. After preaching twice at *New-mills* with great liberty and life, returned to *Burlington*; but was very ill that night; and though quite unwell the next morning, yet proceeded on my way to *Philadelphia*.

Lord's day, *June 21*. Finding myself much recovered, I preached with some animation.

Monday 22. This day my heart was in deep exercise.

Tuesday 23. Walked down to *Gloucester-point*, and then rode to brother *Chew's*; and though very weak, weary, wet and low, while it rained very hard, I preached with some power to many people from these words—*As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it.*

Wednesday 24. At *Greenwich*, met with Mr. *Stringer*, who preached and baptized several people that seemed deeply affected. We then rode together, and had some conversation on the insult which Mr. *Shirly* had given Mr. *Wesley*. As Mr. *Stringer* knew that Mr. *Shirly* had preached for Mr. *Wesley*, and was well acquainted with his doctrine, he was surprized at his conduct.—He said Mr. *Wesley* was undoubtedly a good man, and had been useful to thousands.

Thursday 25. Travelling back towards *Gloucester*, called at 'Squire *Price's*'; and presented him with a petition for raising £150. to discharge the debt on our preaching-house at



*Philadelphia*. He promised both to give, himself, and try others.

Friday 26. Returned to *Philadelphia*, and preached at 8 with some power. But still I am not entirely holy in thought, word and deed. Will not the Lord get the victory? He surely will, and I shall be holy. I find that Satan strives to sow discord among us; and this makes me desirous to leave the city.

Saturday 27. Felt a great desire to live more to the glory of GOD; and preached at night with some life. Received a letter from Mr. *Pilmore* replete with accounts of his preaching abroad, in the church, to large congregations and the like. My heart is still distressed for want of more of GOD. I long to be wholly given up to him; to seek no favour but what cometh from him alone. I want to breathe after GOD in every breath.

Lord's day 28. This was a day of sweet rest to my soul; and the Lord gave me power to speak with some affection.

Monday 29. Set out for *Trentown* with some loose and trifling company in the stage. After preaching in the evening with some life and energy; went the next day to preach in the field, and then returned, and preached with freedom to many people in the court-house.

July 1st. Went over the ferry and preached to many people; among whom were some fine ladies who behaved with airs of great indifferency. Returning to *Trentown*, I preached at night, and the next morning at 5, after which set off for *Philadelphia* with unprofitable company; among whom I sat still as a man dumb; and as one in whose mouth there was no reproof. They appeared so stupidly ignorant, sceptical, deistical and atheistical, that I thought, if there were *no other* hell, I should strive with all my might to shun that. Came home late and weary; but preached with some comfort. I have lately been blest with much purity of desire and fervour of spirit; but greatly thirst after living more to GOD.

[Continued at page 193.]

LETTERS.

## L E T T E R S, &amp;c.

*A short account of the death of Mrs. MOORE, of Baltimore, in Maryland; by Mr. George Shadford, in a letter to a friend.*

**L**AST night I preached a funeral sermon on the death of Mrs. Moore, who gave up her soul into the hands of Christ, the Sunday before.

She was awakened about a year ago; and soon after justified freely through the redemption that is in Jesus. After that, she was at times exercised with many doubts and fears; and had various trials common to the people of GOD. All this while her bodily health was decaying, for she was in a deep consumption.

About a fortnight before her death, the Lord saved her from all doubt and fear, and filled her soul with his pure love. From thenceforward she was like a living flame; and so filled with GOD, that every word she spoke was peculiarly weighty, being so clothed with divine power, that she often drew tears from my eyes, and those who were about her.

She often put me in mind of the martyrs, rejoicing, and clapping their hands in the flames; for the GOD of the Hebrews was evidently with her in her fiery trials. What else could enable her to triumph over all the decays of nature, and in the agonies of death! How often did I hear her say, "I long to be dissolved and to be with Christ!" Her happy soul, like a bird in a snare, fluttered to be gone!

A little before she expired, she said to her sister, "I am just now going! Draw near, and I will tell you what praise, what music I hear!"—She then stopped a little. At last she said, "I cannot stay! Farewel! Farewel! Farewel!" and instantly expired, without either sigh or groan. May I also die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like unto her's!

G. S.

Nov. 25, 1774.

Bishop



*Bishop HALL's account of a remarkable DREAM.*

“**I**N my youth, when I was at *Cambridge*, my brother *Henry* lying with me, early one morning I dreamed that my mother passed by with a sad countenance, and told me, That she would not come to my commencement, (having promised at that time to come to *Cambridge*.) When I related this dream to my brother (both of us waking together in a sweat) he protested he had dreamed the very same. The next carrier brought us word of our mother's death.”

How can this be accounted for on merely rational principles?



## L E T T E R.

[From Mr. J. Downes, to the Rev. J. Wesley.]

*London, Aug. 4, 1774.*

*Rev. Sir,*

**I** TAKE the liberty of laying before you some of the reasonings of my mind, which you seem to be the best able to answer.

Last winter the sweet counsel my wife and I took together, was the means of reviving my poor drooping soul. The more life we had, the more was our earnest desire that I should again be devoted to GOD in his church.

As your answer to our letter encouraged that desire, I cast myself upon the Lord's assistance, and preached at the Foundry. GOD in his infinite mercy was pleased to own his poor creature, and give such a blessing to my own soul, and the souls of several others, as I think fully shewed he was well pleased with the return of his poor prodigal. Being encouraged by this, I preached the week following at *Brentford*, and it seems that I am about as much hurt by preaching once, as I should be in walking two or three miles: both the one and the other gives me a slow fever, for which I take the wormwood draughts.

Blessed

Blessed be GOD, I am more and more convinced, it is my duty to make the *most* of the short remainder of life. My cry is only, Lord what wouldst thou have me to do! But where shall we draw the line between faith and enthusiasm? My wife thinks I ought to give up all, that I may be a preacher; and that as GOD has called me to it, I ought to believe he will give me strength. She thinks GOD has so many times shewn her in prayer, that this is his will, that she is quite willing to run all risks; knowing that our heavenly Father is both able and willing to supply all our needs: and she says, the Lord has so often assured her that he will in this way take care of her, that I shall grieve his Spirit if I do not give up all; and she has an odd, and continued impression that he will make us both useful, and deliver us from this present, perhaps *penal* uselessness. Is this faith or enthusiasm? That which inclines me to the former is, that I know how close she walks with GOD; and how many hours in the day she spends in private prayer: and that this is always the result of her nearest access to the throne of grace. That the Lord may bless you with the choicest of his blessings, is, Rev. Sir, the prayer of your unworthy son and servant in the gospel of Christ,

J. DOWNES.

N. B. A little after this he dropt down dead in the pulpit, just when he had concluded his sermon in West-street Chapel, London!

Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing—shall find doing the will of GOD.

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*A short account of ANN NICHOLS, of Wigan, in Lancashire.*

[Written by a Friend.]

ANN NICHOLS was a spotless pattern of Christian perfection. From the time she experienced this blessing,



bleſſing, ſhe never loſt a ſenſe of it for a moment. The caſe was the ſame in her juſtification. She walked under a true ſenſe of her acceptance every moment till ſhe was ſanctified. A clearer witneſs of the doctrines taught by the Methodiſts I never knew: the ſame is generally believed by our friends who knew her. Her life was chaſte and ſpotleſs, conſtantly diſplaying the length, and breadth, the depth and height of the love of Jeſus. When ſhe was on her death-bed, ſhe claſped her arms round her nurſe's neck, and ſaid, with all the ſtrength ſhe had, "The work of my ſalvation is finiſhed! I can neither doubt nor fear; for Jeſus is now with me!" She departed this life, Dec. 15, 1786, and in the 31ſt year of her age.

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*A ſhort account of the death of Mr. Thomas Lee: in a letter to the Rev. John Weſley: written by Mrs. Lee.*

*Rev. Sir,*

**M**Y dear huſband's laſt illneſs began with a pain in his foot, which ſoon went up into his leg. When he mentioned it, we thought it was the rheumatism, and applied many things to warm it. By theſe means it ſeemingly got better. After ſome time it aſcended into his thigh, and became very exquisite. On the morning before he died, the violence of the pain abated a little. But in the afternoon it grew worſe again: yet he had no apprehenſion of his death.

The evening before he died, he expreſſed great reſignation to the will of the Lord: though, as he ſaid, the pains drank up his ſpirits. He ſaid, "I am the Lord's; and I feel that I am united to him: and I know I ſhall be with him for ever!"

He preached twice the Sunday before he died; although he went to the preaching-houſe on crutches, and ſat all the time he preached. His firſt text that day was, "All fleſh is as graſs, and the glory thereof is as the flower of the graſs: the

the grafs withereth, the flower thereof fadeth away. But the word of the Lord endureth for ever; and this is the word, which by the gospel is preached unto you." His last text was, "Surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear the Lord," &c. In this sermon, he said, "perhaps this will be my last sermon:" and truly the power of the Lord was solemnly felt by most present. And as if he saw his end was near, he gave out a funeral hymn. And when he came to those words,

" By faith we already behold  
That lovely *Jerusalem* here;  
Her walls are of jasper and gold,  
As crystal her buildings are clear,"

he seemed to be quite transported at the thought of meeting Jesus.

The night in which he died, I went to bed as usual. But before I slept, the pain flew up to his heart. On this I arose, and called in *George Esrick*. We raised him up, and put something in his mouth, which came out again. He was so sensible as to take my handkerchief to wipe it up.

We laid him down again. He sobbed several times, looked up once and smiled; closed his eyes, and gently fell asleep.

A few months before, he told me he had never such a view of GOD's love towards him, as he had that morning in prayer. The following words were then made a great blessing to him: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee: I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine." From that time, I believe he never had a shadow of doubt on his mind, concerning his eternal welfare.

I am, Rev. Sir, yours affectionately,

MARY LEE.

*Bolton, Sept. 9, 1786.*

*A short*



*A short account of a Yorkshire man, who dug a pit for his wife and fell into it himself: by Mr. J. F. of Leeds.*

Leeds, May 5, 1786.

“A FEW weeks ago, a man in this neighbourhood, who was weary of his wife, after buying a piece of beef, and rubbing it well over with arsenic, ordered her to roast it for dinner. While it was roasting, the woman was taken so ill, that though he pressed her much, she could not eat a morsel of it: and he making some excuse for not eating of it himself, it was put by for the next day.

But the next day he brought home some fish, and ordered his wife to dress them for his dinner. This being done, he sat down and ate heartily. But before he had done, he was taken very ill. On asking his wife what she had fried the fish with? she said, “with the drippings of the beef I roasted yesterday.” On hearing this he cried out, “Then I am a dead man!” Then throwing down his knife and fork, he confessed what he had done, and died in about two hours!”

(Who that reads this account can help admiring, on the one hand, the providence of GOD, in preserving the life of this injured woman? and, on the other, his justice, in causing the very evil to fall on the head of this hard-hearted sinner, which he so cruelly intended should fall on his wife?)

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## Poetry.

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### On CHARITY.

FAIREST and foremost of the train that wait  
On man's most dignified and happiest state,  
Whether we name thee Charity or Love,  
Chief grace below, and all in all above;

Come

Come, prompt me with benevolent desires,  
 Teach me to kindle at thy gentle fires;  
 And though disgrac'd and slighted, to redeem  
 A poet's name, by making thee her theme.

GOD working ever on a social plan,  
 By various ties attaches man to man:  
 He made at first, though free and unconfin'd,  
 One man the common father of the kind;  
 That every tribe, though plac'd as he sees best,  
 Where seas or desarts part them from the rest,  
 Diff'ring in language, manners, or in face,  
 Might feel themselves allied to all the race.

Again, the band of commerce was design'd  
 T' associate all the branches of mankind;  
 And if a boundless plenty be the robe,  
 Trade is the golden girdle of the globe:  
 Wise to promote whatever end he means,  
**GOD** opens fruitful nature's various scenes:  
 Each climate needs what other climes produce,  
 And offers something to the general use:  
 No land but listens to the common call,  
 And in return receives supply from all:  
 This genial intercourse and mutual aid,  
 Cheers what were else an universal shade;  
 Calls nature from her icy-mantled den,  
 And softens human rock-work into men.

Ingenious art with her expressive face  
 Steps forth to fashion and refine the race;  
 Not only fills necessity's demands,  
 But overcharges her capacious hands:  
 Capricious taste itself can crave no more,  
 Than she supplies from her abounding store:  
 She strikes out all that luxury can ask,  
 And gains new vigour at her endless task.



Here is the spacious arch, the shapely spire;  
 The painter's pencil, and the poet's lyre:  
 From her the canvas borrows light and shade,  
 And verse more lasting, hues that never fade.  
 She guides the finger o'er the dancing keys,  
 Gives difficulty all the grace of ease,  
 And pours a torrent of sweet notes around,  
 Fast as the thirsting ear can drink the sound.

These are the gifts of art, and art thrives most  
 Where commerce has enrich'd the busy coast:  
 He catches all improvements in his flight,  
 Spreads foreign wonders in his country's sight;  
 Imports what others have invented well,  
 And stirs his own to match them, or excel.  
 'Tis thus reciprocating each with each,  
 Alternately the nations learn and teach;  
 While Providence enjoins to every soul  
 An union with the vast terraqueous whole.

But ah! what wish can prosper, or what prayer;  
 For merchants rich in cargoes of despair,  
 Who drive a loathsome traffic, gage and span,  
 And buy the muscles and the bones of man?  
 The tender ties of father, husband, friend,  
 All bonds of nature in that moment end,  
 And each endures, while yet he draws his breath;  
 A stroke as fatal as the scythe of death.  
 The sable warrior, frantic with regret  
 Of her he loves, and never can forget;  
 Loses in tears the far-receding shore;  
 But not the thought that they must meet no more:  
 Depriv'd of her and freedom at a blow,  
 What has he left that he can yet forego?  
 Yes, to deep sadness fullenly resign'd,  
 He feels his body's bondage in his mind,  
 Puts off his generous feelings, and to suit  
 His manners to his fate, puts on the brute:

Some

Some men make gain a fountain, whence proceeds  
 A stream of lib'ral and heroic deeds;  
 The swell of pity, not to be confin'd  
 Within the scanty limits of the mind,  
 Disdains the bank, and throws the golden sands,  
 A rich deposit, on the bordering lands.  
 These have an ear for *his* paternal call,  
 Who makes some rich for the supply of all,  
 GOD's gift with pleasure in his praise employ,  
 And *Thornton* is familiar with the joy.

O could I worship aught beneath the skies,  
 That earth hath seen, or fancy can devise,  
 Thine altar, sacred liberty, should stand,  
 Built by no mercenary, vulgar hand;  
 With fragrant turf, and flowers as wild and fair  
 As ever dress'd a bank, or scented summer-air.  
 Daily, as ever on the mountain's height  
 The deep of morning shed a dawning light;  
 Again, when evening in her sober vest  
 Drew the gray curtain of the fading west;  
 My soul should yield thee willing thanks and praise  
 For the chief blessings of my fairest days.  
 But that were sacrilege—praise is not thine,  
 But his who gave thee, and preserves thee mine:  
 Else I would say (and as I speak, bid fly  
 A captive bird into the boundless sky)  
 Th' UNITED STATES adore thee—thou art come  
 From Sparta hither, and art here at home.  
 We feel thy force still active, at this hour  
 Enjoy immunity from priestly power;  
 While conscience, happier than in ancient years,  
 Owns no superior but the GOD she fears.

True charity, a plant divinely nurs'd,  
 Fed by the love from which it rose at first,  
 Thrives against hope, and in the rudest scene;  
 Storms but enliven its unfading green.

Exuberant



Exub'rant is the shadow it supplies,  
 Its fruit on earth, its growth above the skies.  
 To look at him who form'd us, and redeem'd,  
 So glorious now, though once so disesteem'd;  
 To see a GOD stretch forth a human hand  
 T' uphold the boundless scenes of his command;  
 To recollect that in a form like our's,  
 He bruise'd beneath his feet th' infernal powers,  
 Captivity led captive rose to claim  
 The wreath he won so dearly, in our name;  
 That thron'd above all height, he condescends  
 To call the few that trust in him his friends;  
 That in the heaven of heavens, that space he deems  
 Too scanty for th' exertion of his beams,  
 And shines as if impatient to bestow  
 Life and a kingdom upon worms below:—  
 That light imparts a never dying flame,  
 Though feeble in degree, in kind the same.  
 Like him, the soul thus kindl'd from above,  
 Spreads wide her arms of universal love,  
 And still enlarg'd as she receives the grace,  
 Includes creation in her close embrace.  
 Behold a Christian—and without the fires  
 The founder of that name alone inspires,  
 Though all accomplishments, all knowledge meet,  
 To make the shining prodigy complete,  
 Whoever boasts that name, behold a cheat.

Thus have I fought to grace a serious lay  
 With many a wild indeed, but flowery spray;  
 In hopes to gain what else I must have lost,  
 Th' attention pleasure has so much engross'd.  
 But if unhappily deceiv'd I dream,  
 And prove too weak for so divine a theme,  
 Let Charity forgive me a mistake,  
 That zeal, not vanity, has chanc'd to make,  
 And spare the poet for the subject's sake.

THE

## Arminian Magazine,

For APRIL 1790.



GOD'S LOVE TO MANKIND. *Manifested by disproving  
his Absolute Decree for their Damnation.*

[Concluded from Page 112.]

THE fear of hell also is a strong curb to hold men in from impiety; "and therefore," saith one, "GOD hath planted in men a fear of vengeance, that by it, as the ship by the rudder, the soul may be presently turned aside from any rocks, gulphs, or quicksands of sin, when it is near them; and may steer its course another way." For this cause, the fear of GOD, and abstaining from evil, are often joined together in scripture, Job. i. 1. Exod. i. 17. And the want of this fear is made the root of all licentiousness in sinning, Gen. xx. 11.

The second branch of this reason is, that by the absolute decree, hope and fear are taken away. For hope is properly exercised about some good thing, which may be obtained; not which must be obtained of necessity: and the object of fear, is an evil that may be escaped. For fear is a fleeing from evil; and, therefore, supposeth the evil to be avoidable: for no man will flee from an evil that cannot be prevented, but will yield up himself to it, as *Cæsar* did his body to the murderers in the senate-house. Now, by this decree, heaven and hell are not objects possible, but necessary. Heaven shall unavoidably be obtained by those that  
are



are elected, and hell must as certainly be endured by those that are reprobated. For men have no power to alter their eternal estates: all men by this decree are precisely determined to one state, to necessary salvation or necessary damnation, without any power or liberty to choose whether.

And from hence this conclusion is clear, that the absolute decree taketh away the chiefest inducements to holiness, and determents from wickedness; and consequently hindereth a godly life exceedingly.

The injuriousness of this doctrine to a godly life may further appear by these considerations that follow, one depending upon another.

1. Absolute and peremptory decrees are inevitable, whatever the things be, about which they are exercised: and men's everlasting states, if they be absolutely determined, are altogether undecidable. The law of destiny is undecidable. And the reason is, because it hath an inevitable cause, the adamantine decrees of Almighty GOD, which are undecidable two ways.

1. *Irreversible*, liable to no repeal (as the statutes are, which are made in our parliaments) but far more unalterable than the laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*. *As I have spoken, so will I bring it to pass: I have purposed and I will do it, Isaiah* xlii. 11. Men many times recall their words, because they utter things rashly; and repeal their statutes and ordinances, because they see some inconvenience in them, which they could not foresee: but GOD never calleth in his decrees, because they are all made in infinite wisdom.

2. *Irresistible*. It lies not in the power of any creature to disannul them. *Who hath resisted his will? Rom.* ix. 19. *Our GOD is in heaven, he doth whatsoever he will, Ps.* cxv. 3. Whatsoever is once concluded by his absolute will, is no ways alterable by the will of man. It is as possible for a man to hinder the rising of the sun, or to stay his course in the heavens; to stop the revolutions of the year, and overturn the whole course of nature, as to make the least change in any of GOD's absolute decrees.

II. Men's actions about ends and things, determined by an absolute decree, are vain and fruitless ; because they cannot make them otherwise than they are determined to be. It is absolutely decreed, the devils shall be damned : were it not a fruitless thing in them by prayers, tears, and endeavours, to seek to alter it ? It is also simply decreed, that the soul of man shall be immortal : is it not a labour in vain, for any man to use means that his soul may be annihilated ? It is ordained, that the sun shall rule the day, and the moon the night ; that the one shall finish his proper course in a year, the other in a month : would not a man's endeavour to make an alteration in these things, be unprofitable and ridiculous ? Without doubt it would : so likewise, in vain do men labour to obtain everlasting life, and avoid eternal death, if there be no power and liberty in their hands to chuse life or death, but they must of necessity take that which is assigned them, be it life or death. For by their labour they effect just nothing : if they be absolutely appointed to destruction ; their hearing, reading, praying, and mourning for their sins, cannot possibly procure their salvation ; damned they must be. And if they are absolutely ordained to salvation ; their neglect of holy duties, their ignorance, their love of pleasures, and continuance in a course of ungodliness, cannot bring them to damnation ; they must be saved. If so many souls in a congregation be in this manner decreed to heaven or hell ; the minister preacheth in vain, and the people hear in vain : for there cannot one soul be saved by all his or their pains, which is ordained to hell ; nor one soul be cast away by his or their negligence, which is appointed to heaven.

III. Men are not willing to be employed in fruitless actions, if they know it.

*I so run, saith St. Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. not as uncertainly ; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air : but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection ; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.* The meaning is, I endeavour to keep GOD's commandments ; I fight with the temptations of the devil,  
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the allurements of the world, and mine own corruptions; I keep my body low by watchings and fastings, and other exercises of holy discipline. But, do I all this at random? uncertain whether I shall obtain any good, or prevent any mischief hereby? No; but I do this, as one that is sure that by so doing I shall attain everlasting life; and without so doing, I cannot avoid eternal death: intimating in these words the common disposition of men, which is to labour, where some proportionable good is to be gotten, or evil prevented; otherwise to spare their heads and hands too.

To be employed in fruitless affairs, is both a folly and a misery.

1. A *folly*: for no man useth deliberation about things necessary, saith the philosopher. And our Saviour, speaking of things above our power, saith to his disciples, Matt. vi. 27. Luke xii. 26. *Why take ye thought about such things?* which is as much as if he had said, it is an argument of folly in you to trouble yourselves about such things as lie not in your power.

2. It is a *misery* in the opinions of all men, as the fable of *Sisyphus* implieth, who (as the poets feign) is punished in hell with the rolling of a great stone to the top of a steep hill, where it cannot rest, but presently tumbles down again.

The moral of that fable is, that it is a torment, and a torment fit for hell, for a man to be set about any work that is fruitless and in vain. Men will rather be exercised in high and hard employments that produce proportionable ends, than pick straws, play with feathers, or, with *Domitian*, spend their time in killing flies, or do any other easy work, which endeth in nothing but air and emptiness. And, therefore, when *Balaam* once saw that the Lord had fully determined to bless *Israel*, he gave over, and set no more enchantments. And reason teacheth every man to do the like. If any man were fully possessed with a persuasion, that his temporal estate was determined in heaven, and that he should be worth just so much, neither more nor less; he would conclude, that his care and pains could nothing profit him, nor his idleness impoverish him, and so would quickly be persuaded

suaded to take his ease. And were it evident, that every common-wealth had a condition appointed for it which could not be altered, and a fatal period which could not be avoided; then would the state make no laws and ordinances for the preventing of its ruin, or the procuring of its prosperity or continuance.

There are three things which are usually answered.

First, That many of them who believe this doctrine, are holy and good men. I confess it: but it is no thanks to their opinion that they are so (the true and natural *genius* of which is to beget sloth, and to countenance men in carnal liberty :) but either to GOD's providence (who will not suffer this doctrine for his own glory's sake and the good of men, to have any great stroke in their lives;) or to men's incogitancy, who think not of reducing it to practice, and drawing conclusions out of it, but rest in the naked speculation of it, as they do of many others: or lastly, to some good practical conclusions which they meet with in the word of GOD, such as, *Be ye holy, as I am holy—Without holiness no man shall see GOD—If ye consent and obey, ye shall eat the good things of the land—Godliness hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come.* And hence we may learn to measure this opinion, not by the lives of some few of the men that hold it, but by the natural consequences of it. No man that hath thoroughly sucked it in, and understandeth the force of it, but will either quite relinquish it, or live according to the natural appointment of it, that is, licentiously.

Secondly, it is said, that albeit this doctrine teach, That men are absolutely elected, or absolutely reprobated: yet

1. It tells no man who in particular is elected, who rejected.

2. It teacheth that men must get the knowledge of their election by good works, and so doth rather encourage, than rouse, honest endeavours.

For answer to the first of these: The ignorance of a man's particular state doth not alter the cause a jot: for he that believeth in general, that many, and they the greatest company without comparison, are inevitably ordained to destruction,



on, and a few to salvation, is able out of these two general propositions, to make these particular conclusions; either I am absolutely chosen to grace and glory, or absolutely cast off from both. If I be chosen, I must of necessity believe, and be saved; if I be cast off, I must as necessarily not believe, and be damned.

What need I, therefore, take thought either way about means or end? My end is fixed in heaven, and the means too; my final perseverance in faith, and my salvation; or my continuance in unbelief, and my damnation. If I lie under this necessity of believing and being saved, or of dying in unbelief and being damned: in vain do I trouble myself about means or end; I may take mine ease, and so I will: it is enough for me to sit down, and wait what GOD will do unto me. "Thus *Tiberius*," says *Suetonius*, "was the more negligent in religion, because he was fully persuaded, that all things came to pass by destiny." And in this manner (it is to be feared) do too many reason in their hearts, and on this very ground (though they will not perhaps acknowledge it) encourage themselves in profaneness.

To the second, I answer, that men ordinarily will not think the getting the knowledge of their election (if that be all) worth all those painful duties of religion that are to be performed, and all those sweet and pleasing sins which are to be relinquished; they will rest contented without it for a while, rather than pay so dearly for it: and the rather, because

1. When they have gotten it, it is in most but a weak and conjectural knowledge, obscured with many clouds and uncertainties.

2. It must be maintained with a great deal of pains and care, or else it will be lost again. To the retaining of it, is required a continual endeavour to keep a clear conscience, which is irksome and tedious. Men, therefore, had need of a stronger motive to obedience than this is, or else they will do nothing.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, they that defend and teach absolute reprobation, say they, do earnestly exhort men to good works, and deny that any can be saved except they live honestly.

So much was also said in the behalf of *Epicurus*, viz. "That he denied that any man that lived not honestly, could live pleasantly." But *Tully* answered roundly: "As if I cared what he affirmeth or denieth: this I ask, what is meet for him to say, who placeth happiness in pleasure?" And so it mattereth not what these men teach, but what they should teach, if they will speak consistently with their own conclusions.

I come now to my last reason against absolute reprobation, drawn from the *uncomfortableness* of it. It is a doctrine full of desperation: and, therefore, can be no doctrine of GOD's word: for that is good news to men, a storehouse of sweet consolations for us in our best and worst conditions. *These things were written*, saith the apostle, *That by patience and comfort of the scriptures, we might have hope*, Rom. xv. 4. implying, that therefore was the Word written, and left to the church, that by the comforts comprised in it, those poor souls that look towards heaven, might never want, in any changes of this mortal life, a sweet gale of hope to refresh them, and to carry on their ship towards the haven.

This doctrine leadeth many into temptation, and into such an one, as is as sharp and dangerous as any the tempter hath. The devil can easily persuade a man that maketh absolute reprobation a part of his creed, that he is one of those absolute reprobates; because there are far more absolute reprobates, even a hundred for one, than absolute chosen ones: and a man hath a great deal more reason to think, that he is one of the most, than one of the fewest; one of the huge multitude of inevitable cast-a-ways, than one of that little flock for whom GOD hath precisely prepared a kingdom. Such a man is not only capable of, but framed and fashioned by his opinion for this suggestion; which is a very fore one, if we may believe *Calvin*, *Bucer*, and *Zanchius*.



*Calvin* telleth us, that “ the devil cannot assault a believer “ with a temptation more dangerous.” And a little after he saith, that “ it is so much the deadlier, by how much commoner it is than any other. So ordinary is this temptation, “ that he who is at all times free from it, is a rare man ;” [we are to conceive, that he speaketh of those who hold absolute reprobation] “ and so dangerous it is, that if it get “ strength, he who is under it, is either miserably torment- “ ed, or mightily astonished.” And a little after he saith again : “ He that will not wreck his soul, must avoid this “ rock.”

*Bucer* also saith, “ This doubt, whether we be predestinate “ or no, must be repelled, as the head of every pernicious “ temptation: for he that doubteth of this, cannot believe “ that he is called or justified, that is, he cannot be a christi- “ an. Every man, therefore, must presume upon it, as a “ principle of his faith, that he is elected.” And this very speech of *Bucer's*, *Zanchius* maketh use of to the same purpose.

We see, then, by these testimonies, that this temptation is very dangerous and ordinary too, to such as think there are absolute reprobates.

This truth will further appear by the example of *Petrus Ilosuanus*, a school-master in *Hungary*, who going to hang himself, signified in a writing, which he left in his study, the true cause of that his unnatural act. In that writing he delivered these three things :

1. That he was of *Calvin's* and *St. Austin's* opinion, that men are not dealt with according to their works, good or evil; but there are more hidden causes of men's eternal conditions.

2. That he was one of that woful company of absolute reprobates, a vessel prepared to dishonour ; and that, therefore, though his life had been none of the worst, he could not possibly be saved.

3. That being unable to bear those dreadful apprehensions of wrath, he hanged himself. These are some of his last words

words there recorded: " I go to those infernal lakes, an eternal reproach to my country. I commend you to GOD, whose mercy is denied to me."

*End of the Absolute Decree of Damnation disproved.*

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## S E R M O N XVI.

On 1 CORINTHIANS xii. 31.

*Covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet I shew unto you a more excellent way.*

1. **I**N the preceding verses St. Paul has been speaking of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost: such as healing the sick, prophesying in the proper sense of the word, that is, foretelling things to come, speaking with strange tongues, such as the speaker had never learned, and the miraculous interpretation of tongues. And these gifts the apostle allows to be desirable: yea, he exhorts the Corinthians, at least the teachers among them (to whom chiefly, if not solely, they were wont to be given in the first ages of the church) to *covet* them *earnestly*, that thereby they might be qualified to be more useful either to christians or heathens. *And yet*, says he, *I shew unto you a more excellent way*, far more desirable than all these put together: inasmuch as it will infallibly lead you to happiness, both in this world and in the world to come: whereas you might have all those gifts, yea, in the highest degree, and yet be miserable both in time and eternity.

2. It does not appear, that these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were common in the church for more than two or three centuries. We seldom hear of them after that fatal period, when the emperor *Constantine* called himself a christian; and from a vain imagination of promoting the christian



christian cause thereby, heaped riches, and power, and honour, upon christians in general; but in particular, upon the christian clergy. From this time they almost totally ceased: very few instances of the kind were found. The cause of this was not (as has been vulgarly supposed) "because there was no more occasion for them;" because all the world was become christians. This is a miserable mistake: not a twentieth part of it was then even nominally christians. The real cause was, *the love of many*, almost of all christians, so called, was *waxed cold*. The christians had no more of the Spirit of Christ than the other heathens. The Son of man, when he came to examine his church, could hardly *find faith upon earth*. This was the real cause, why the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were no longer to be found in the christian church; because the christians were turned heathens again, and had only a dead form left.

3. However I would not at present speak of these, of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, but of the ordinary: and these likewise we may *covet earnestly*, in order to be more useful in our generation. With this view we may covet "the gift of *convincing* speech," in order to "sound the unbelieving heart:" and the gift of *persuasion* to move the affections, as well as enlighten the understanding. We may covet *knowledge*, both of the word and of the works of GOD, whether of providence or grace. We may desire a measure of that faith, which on particular occasions, wherein the glory of GOD, or the happiness of men is nearly concerned, goes far beyond the power of natural causes. We may desire an easy elocution, a pleasing address, with resignation to the will of our Lord; yea, whatever would enable us, as we have opportunity, to be useful wherever we are. These gifts we may innocently desire: but there is a more excellent way.

4. The way of love, of loving all men for GOD's sake, of humble, gentle, patient love, is that which the apostle so admirably describes in the ensuing chapter. And without this, he assures us, all eloquence, all knowledge, all faith, all works, and all sufferings, are of no more value in the  
fight

sight of GOD, than sounding brass or a rumbling symbal: and are not of the least avail, toward our eternal salvation. Without this, all we know, all we believe, all we do, all we suffer, will profit us nothing in the great day of account.

5. But at present I would take a different view of the text, and point out a more excellent way in another sense. It is the observation of an ancient writer, that there have been from the beginning two orders of christians. The one lived an innocent life, conforming in all things not sinful, to the customs and fashions of the world, doing many good works, abstaining from gross evils, and attending the ordinances of GOD. They endeavoured in general to have a conscience void of offence in their outward behaviour, but did not aim at any particular strictness, being in most things like their neighbours. The other sort of christians not only abstained from all appearance of evil, were zealous of good works in every kind, and attended all the ordinances of GOD; but likewise used all diligence to attain the whole mind that was in Christ, and laboured to walk in every point, as their beloved Master. In order to this, they walked in a constant course of universal self-denial, trampling on every pleasure which they were not divinely conscious prepared them for taking pleasure in GOD. They took up their cross daily. They strove, they agonized without intermission, to enter in at the strait gate. This one thing they did; they spared no pains to arrive at the summit of christian holiness: *leaving the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, to go on to perfection: to know all that love of GOD which passeth knowledge, and to be filled with all the fulness of GOD.*

6. From long experience and observation I am inclined to think, that whoever finds redemption in the blood of Jesus, whoever is justified, has then the choice of walking in the higher or the lower path. I believe, the Holy Spirit at that time sets before him the more excellent way, and incites him to walk therein, to chuse the narrowest path in the narrow way, to aspire after the heights and depths of holiness, after the entire image of GOD. But if he does not accept this offer, he insensibly declines into  
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the lower order of christians. He still goes on in what may be called a good way, serving GOD in his degree, and finds mercy in the close of life, through the blood of the covenant.

7. I would be far from quenching the smoking flax, from discouraging those that serve GOD in a low degree. But I would not wish them to stop here: I would encourage them to come up higher: without thundering hell and damnation in their ears, without condemning the way wherein they were, telling them it is the way that leads to destruction. I will endeavour to point out to them, what is in every respect a more excellent way.

8. Let it be well remembered, I do not affirm, that all who do not walk in this way, are in the high road to hell. But thus much I must affirm, they will not have so high a place in heaven, as they would have had, if they had chosen the better part: and will this be a small loss? The having so many fewer stars in your crown of glory! Will it be a little thing to have a lower place than you might have had in the kingdom of your Father? Certainly there will be no sorrow in heaven: there all tears will be wiped from our eyes. But if it were possible grief could enter there, we should grieve at that irreparable loss! Irreparable then, but not now! Now by the grace of GOD, we may chuse the *more excellent way*. Let us now compare this in a few particulars, with the way wherein most christians walk.

I. To begin at the beginning of the day. It is the manner of the generality of christians, if they are not obliged to work for their living, *to rise*, particularly in winter, at eight or nine in the morning, after having lain in bed eight or nine, if not more hours. I do not say now (as I should have been very apt to do fifty years ago) that all who indulge themselves in this manner, are in the way to hell. But neither can I say, they are in the way to heaven, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily. Sure I am, there is a more excellent way, to promote health both of body and mind. From an observation of more than sixty years, I have learnt, that men in health require at  
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An average, from six to seven hours' sleep; and healthy women a little more, from seven to eight, in four and twenty hours. I know this quantity of sleep to be most advantageous to the body as well as the soul. It is preferable to any medicine which I have known, both for preventing and removing nervous disorders. It is therefore undoubtedly the most excellent way, in defiance of fashion and custom, to take just so much sleep, as experience proves our nature to require: seeing this is indisputably most conducive both to bodily and spiritual health. And why should not you walk in this way? Because it is difficult? Nay, with men it is impossible. But all things are possible with GOD; and by his grace, all things will be possible to *you*. Only continue instant in prayer, and you will find this, not only possible, but easy: yea, and it will be far easier, to rise early constantly, than to do it sometimes. But then you must begin at the right end, if you will rise early, you must sleep early. Impose it upon yourself, unless when something extraordinary occurs, to go to bed at a fixed hour. Then, the difficulty of it will be soon over; but the advantage of it will remain for ever.

II. The generality of christians as soon as they rise, are accustomed to use some kind of *prayer*: and probably to use the same form still, which they learned when they were eight or ten years old. Now I do not condemn those who proceed thus, (though many do,) as mocking GOD; though they have used the same form without any variation, for twenty or thirty years together. But surely there is a more excellent way of ordering our private devotions. What if you were to follow the advice given by that great and good man, Mr. *Law*, on this subject? Consider both your outward and inward state, and vary your prayers accordingly. For instance: suppose your outward state is prosperous: suppose you are in a state of health, ease and plenty, having your lot cast among kind relations, good neighbours, and agreeable friends, that love you, and you them: then your outward state manifestly calls for praise and thanksgiving to GOD. On the other hand, if you are in a state of adver-

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fity ; if GOD has laid trouble upon your loins ; if you are in poverty, in want, in outward distress ; if you are in any imminent danger ; if you are in pain and sickness : then you are clearly called to pour out your soul before GOD, in such prayer as is suited to your circumstances. In like manner you may suit your devotions to your inward state, the present state of your mind. Is your soul in heaviness, either from a sense of sin, or through manifold temptations ? then let your prayer consist of such confessions, petitions, and supplications, as are agreeable to your distressed situation of mind. On the contrary, is your soul in peace ? Are you rejoicing in GOD ? are his consolations not small with you ? Then say with the psalmist, *Thou art my GOD, and I will thank thee : thou art my GOD, and I will praise thee.* You may likewise when you have time, add to your other devotions, a little reading and meditation : and perhaps a psalm of praise, the natural effusion of a thankful heart. You must certainly see, that this is a more excellent way than the poor, dry form which you used before.

III. 1. The generality of christians, after using some prayer, usually apply themselves to the *business* of their calling. Every man that has any pretence to be a christian, will not fail to do this : seeing it is impossible that an idle man can be a good man : sloth being inconsistent with religion. But with what view ? For what end do you undertake and follow your worldly business ? “ To provide things necessary for myself and my family.” It is a good answer, as far as it goes ; but it does not go far enough. For a *Turk* or a heathen goes so far ; does his work for the very same ends. But a christian may go abundantly farther ; his end in all his labour is, to please GOD ; to do, not his own will, but the will of him that sent him into the world, for this very purpose, to do the will of GOD on earth, as angels do in heaven. He works for eternity. He *labours, not for the meat that perisheth* : this is the smallest part of his motive ; *but for that which endureth to everlasting life.* And is not this a more excellent way ?

2. Again.

2. Again. In what *manner* do you transact your worldly business? I trust, with *diligence*; whatever your hand findeth to do, doing it with your might: in justice, rendering to all their due, in every circumstance of life: yea, and in mercy, doing unto every man, what you would, he should do unto you. This is well: but a christian is called to go still farther; to add piety to justice; to intermix prayer, especially the prayer of the heart, with all the labour of his hands. Without this, all his diligence and justice only shew him to be an honest heathen; and many there are who profess the christian religion, that go no farther than honest heathenism.

3. Yet again. In what *spirit* do you go through your business? In the spirit of the world, or the Spirit of Christ? I am afraid thousands of those who are called good christians, do not understand the question. If you act in the Spirit of Christ, you carry the end you at first proposed, through all your work from first to last. You do every thing in the spirit of sacrifice, giving up your will to the will of GOD, and continually aiming, not at ease, pleasure, or riches, not at any thing this short-enduring world can give; but merely at the glory of GOD. Now can any one deny, that this is the most excellent way of pursuing worldly business?

IV. 1. But these tenements of clay which we bear about us, require constant reparation, or they will sink into the earth from which they were taken, even sooner than nature requires. Daily food is necessary to prevent this, to repair the constant decays of nature. It was common in the heathen world, when they were about to use this, to take meat or even drink, *libare pateram Jovi*, to pour out a little to the honour of their god: although the gods of the heathens were but devils, as the apostle justly observes. "It seems," says a late writer, "there was once some such custom as this in our own country. For we still frequently see a gentleman before he sits down to dinner in his own house, holding his hat before his face, and perhaps seeming to say something: though he generally does it in such a manner, that no one can tell what he says." Now what if  
instead



instead of this, every head of a family, before he sat down to eat and drink, either morning, noon, or night, (for the reason of the thing is the same at every hour of the day) was seriously to ask a blessing from GOD, on what he was about to take : Yea, and afterward, seriously to return thanks to the Giver of all his blessings. Would not this be a more excellent way, than to use that dull farce, which is worse than nothing, being in reality no other than a mockery both of GOD and man ?

2. As to the *quantity* of their food, good sort of men do not usually eat to excess ; at least not so far as to make themselves sick with meat, or to intoxicate themselves with drink. And as to the manner of taking it, it is usually innocent, mixt with a little mirth, which is said to help digestion. So far, so good. And provided they take only that measure of plain, cheap, wholesome food, which most promotes health of body and mind, there will be no cause of blame. Neither can I require you to take that advice of Mr. *Herbert*, though he was a good man :

“ Take thy meat : think it dust : then eat a bit,  
And say with all, earth to earth I commit.”

This is too melancholy : it does not suit with that cheerfulness, which is highly proper at a christian meal. Permit me to illustrate this subject with a little story. The king of *France* one day pursuing the chace, outrode all his company, who after seeking him some time, found him sitting in a cottage eating bread and cheese. Seeing them, he cried out, Where have I lived all my time ? I never before tasted so good food in my life ! “ Sire,” said one of them, “ you never had so *good sauce* before ; for you were never hungry.” Now it is true, Hunger is a good sauce : but there is one that is better still ; that is, Thankfulness. Sure that is the most agreeable food, which is seasoned with this. And why should not yours at every meal ? You need not then fix your eye on death ; but receive every morsel as a pledge of life eternal. The Author of your being gives you in this food, not only a reprieve from death, but an earnest

earnest, that in a little time *death shall be swallowed up in victory.*

V. The time of taking our food is usually a time of *conversation* also: as it is natural, to refresh our minds while we refresh our bodies. Let us consider a little, in what manner the generality of christians usually converse together. What are the ordinary subjects of their conversation? If it is harmless (as one would hope it is) if there be nothing in it profane, nothing immodest, nothing untrue, or unkind: if there be no tale-bearing, backbiting or evil-speaking, they have reason to praise GOD for his restraining grace. But there is more than this implied, in *ordering our conversation aright.* In order to this it is needful, first, That *your communication*, that is, discourse or conversation, *be good*, that it be materially good, on good subjects; not fluttering about any thing that occurs. For what have you to do with courts and kings? It is not your business to

“ Fight o’er their wars, reform the state,”

unless when some remarkable event calls for the acknowledgment of his justice or mercy. You *must* indeed sometimes talk of worldly things; otherwise we may as well go out of the world. But it should only be so far as is needful: then we should return to a better subject. Secondly, let your conversation be *to the use of edifying*; calculated to edify either the speaker, or the hearers, or both; to build them up, as each has particular need, either in faith, or love, or holiness: Thirdly, see that it not only gives entertainment, but in one kind or another, *ministers grace to the hearers.* Now is not this a more excellent way of *conversing*, than the harmless way above-mentioned?

VI. One point only remains to be considered; that is the use of money. What is the way wherein the generality of christians employ this? and is there not a more excellent way?

1. The generality of christians usually set apart something yearly, perhaps a tenth or even one-eighth part of their income, whether it arise from yearly revenue, or from trade,  
for



for charitable uses. A few I have known, who said like *Zaccheus*, " Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor." O that it would please GOD to multiply those friends of mankind, those general benefactors ! But,

2. Besides those who have a stated rule, there are thousands who give large sums to the poor : especially when any striking instance of distress is represented to them in lively colours.

3. I praise GOD for all of you who act in this manner. May you never be weary of well-doing ! May GOD restore what you give seven-fold into your own bosom ! But yet I shew unto you a more excellent way.

4. You may consider yourself as one in whose hands the Proprietor of heaven and earth and all things therein, has lodged a part of his goods, to be disposed of according to his direction. And his direction is, that you should look upon yourself as one of a certain number of indigent persons, who are to be provided for out of that portion of his goods, wherewith you are entrusted. You have two advantages over the rest: the one, that *it is more blessed to give than to receive* ; the other, that you are to serve yourself, first : and others afterwards. This is the light wherein you are to see yourself and them. But to be more particular, first, if you have no family, after you have provided for yourself, give away all that remains : so that

" Each Christmas your accounts may clear,  
And wind your bottom round the year."

This was the practice of all the young men at *Oxford*, who were called *Methodists*. For example. One of them had thirty pounds a year. He lived on twenty-eight, and gave away forty shillings. The next year receiving sixty pounds, he still lived on twenty-eight, and gave away two and thirty. The third year he received ninety pounds, and gave away sixty-two. The fourth year he received an hundred and twenty pounds. Still he lived as before on twenty-eight ; and gave to the poor ninety-two. Was not this a more excellent way ? Secondly, if you have a family, seriously consider

sider before GOD, how much each member of it wants, in order to have what is needful for life and godliness. And in general, do not allow them less, nor much more than you allow yourself. Thirdly, this being done, fix your purpose, to “gain no more.” I charge you in the name of GOD, do not increase your substance! as it comes daily or yearly, so let it go: otherwise you *lay up treasures upon earth*. And this our Lord as flatly forbids, as murder and adultery. By doing it, therefore, you would *treasure up to yourselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of GOD*.

5. But suppose it were not forbidden, how can you, on principles of reason, spend your money in a way, which GOD may *possibly forgive*, instead of spending it in a manner which he will *certainly reward*? You will have no reward in heaven, for what you *lay up*: you will, for what you *lay out*: every pound you put into the earthly bank, is sunk: it brings no interest above. But every pound you give to the poor, is put into the bank of heaven. And it will bring glorious interest: yea, and such as will be accumulating to all eternity.

6. Who then is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you! Let him resolve this day, this hour, this moment, the Lord assisting him, to chuse in all the preceding particulars the *more excellent way*: and let him steadily keep it, both with regard to sleep, prayer, work, food, and conversation: and particularly, with regard to the employment of that important *talent, money*. Let *your* heart answer to the call of GOD, “From this moment, GOD being my helper, I will lay up no more treasure upon earth: this one thing I will do, I will lay up treasure in heaven: I will render unto GOD the things that are GOD’s: I will give him all my goods and all my heart.”



## AN EXTRACT

Of the Revd. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 131.]

**SUNDAY, July 10.** I administered the Lord's supper at the *Castle*. At one I expounded at Mr. *Fox's*, as usual. The great power of GOD was with us, and one who had been in despair several years, received a witness that she was a child of GOD.

Monday 11. Hearing Mr. *Whitefield* was arrived from *Georgia*, I hastened to *London*; and on Tuesday 12, GOD gave us once more to take sweet counsel together.

Friday 15. I preached at St. *Antholine's*.

Saturday 16. One who had examined himself by the reflections wrote *Oct.* 14, made the following observations on the state of his own soul.

1. I judge thus of myself. But I feel it not. Therefore there is in me still, the old heart of stone.

2. I judge thus of happiness. But I still hanker after creature-happiness. My soul is almost continually running out after one creature or another, and *imagining* How happy should I be in such or such a condition. I have more pleasure in eating and drinking, and in the company of those I love, than I have in GOD. I have a relish for earthly happiness. I have not a relish for heavenly. *I savour* ( φρονῶ ) *the things of men, not the things of GOD.* Therefore there is in me still the carnal heart, the φρόνημα σαρκός.

3. I judge thus of holiness. But I know it not. I know not (by experience) what the life of GOD means. Indeed I see neither myself, nor happiness nor holiness, but by a natural light, acquired in a natural way, by conversing, reading and meditation. I have not spiritual light. I have not the supernatural light. I am not taught of GOD.

I speculatively know, what light is ; and I see the light of faith, just as that man sees the light of the sun, on whose closed eyes the sun shines. But I want the Holy Ghost to open my eyes, that I may see all things clearly.

Therefore the eyes of my understanding are not yet opened, but the old veil is still upon my heart.

II. " This is the design of *my* life." But a thousand little designs are daily stealing into my soul. This is my *ultimate* design : but *intermediate* designs are continually creeping in upon me ; designs (though often disguis'd) of pleasing myself, of doing my own will ; designs wherein, I do not eye GOD, at least, not him singly.

Therefore, my eye is not yet single ; but I am still of a double heart.

III. Are my desires new ? Not all. Some are new, some old. Not any properly ; but partly new and partly old. My desires are like my designs. My *great* desire is, To have *Christ formed in my heart by faith*. But little desires are daily stealing into my soul. And so my great hopes and fears have respect to GOD. But a thousand little ones creep in between them.

Again ; my desires, passions and inclinations in general are mixt ; having something of Christ, and something of earth. I love you, for instance. But my love is only partly spiritual, and partly natural. Something of *my own* cleaves to that which is of GOD. Nor can I divide the earthly part from the heavenly.

Therefore I am not pure in heart. But herein manifestly appears, that I am not a new creature.

*Sunday 17.* I preached in the afternoon at *Islington*: In the evening at *St. Swithin's*, for the last time. *Sunday 24.* I preached at *Great St. Bartholomew's* in the morning, and at *Islington* in the afternoon ; where we had the blessed sacrament every day this week, and were comforted on every side.

*Wednesday 27.* I preached at *Basking-shaw* church: *Sunday 31.* to many thousands, in *St. George's, Spittle-Fields*. And to a yet more crowded congregation at *Whitechapel*,



in the afternoon, I declared those glad tidings (O that they would know the things which make for their peace!) *I will heal their backsliding: I will love them freely.*

Monday, January 1, 1739. Mr. Hall, Kinchin, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutchins, and my brother Charles, were present at our love-feast in *Fetter-Lane*, with about sixty of our brethren. About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of GOD came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his majesty, we broke out with one voice, *We praise thee O GOD; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.*

Thursday 4. One who had had the form of godliness many years, wrote the following reflections:

“ My friends affirm *I am mad*, because I said *I was not a christian a year ago*. I affirm, I am not a christian now. Indeed what I might have been I know not, had I been faithful to the grace then given, when expecting nothing less, I received such a sense of the forgiveness of my sins, as till then I never knew. But that I am not a christian at this day, I as assuredly know, as that Jesus is the Christ.

“ For a christian is one who has the fruits of the Spirit of Christ, which (to mention no more) are love, peace, joy. But these I have not. I have not any love of GOD. I do not love either the Father or the Son. Do you ask, how do I know, whether I love GOD? I answer by another question, How do you know, whether you love me? Why, as you know, whether you are hot or cold. You feel this moment, that you do or do not love me. And I *feel* this moment, I do not love GOD; which therefore, I *know*, because I *feel* it. There is no word more proper, more clear, or more strong.

“ And I know it also by St. John's plain rule, *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*. For I love the world. I desire the things of the world, some or other of them, and have done all my life. I have always placed some part of my happiness in some or other of the things

things that are seen. Particularly in meat and drink, and in the company of those I loved. My desire, if not in a gross and lustful, yet in a more subtle and refined manner, has been almost continually running out towards this or that person. For many years I have been, yea and still am, hankering after a happiness, in loving, and being loved by one or another. And in these I have from time to time taken more pleasure than in GOD. Nay I do so at this day. I often ask my heart, when I am in company with one that I love, "do I take more delight in you or in GOD?" And cannot but answer, *in you*. For in truth, I do not delight in GOD at all. Therefore I am so far from loving GOD with all my heart, that whatever I love at all, I love more than GOD. So that all the love I have, is flat idolatry.

"Again; joy in the Holy Ghost I have not. I have now and then some starts of joy in GOD: but it is not that *joy*. For it is not abiding. Neither is it greater than I have had on some worldly occasions. So that I can in no wise be said to *rejoice evermore*; much less to *rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*.

"Yet again; I have not *the peace of GOD*; *that peace*, peculiarly so called. The peace I have may be easily accounted for on natural principles. I have health, strength, friends, a competent fortune, and a composed cheerful temper. Who would not have a sort of peace in such circumstances? but I have none which can with any truth or propriety be called, a peace which passeth all understanding.

From hence I conclude (and let all the *saints of the world* hear, that wherein soever they boast, they may be found even as I) though I have given, and do give all my goods to feed the poor, I am not a christian. Though I have endured hardship, though I have in all things denied myself and taken up my cross, I am not a christian. My works are nothing, my sufferings are nothing; I have not the fruits of the Spirit of Christ. Though I have constantly used all the means of grace, for twenty years, I am not a christian. Yea though I have all (other) faith; since I have not *that faith which purifieth the heart*. Verily, verily I say unto you,



you, I *must be born again*. For except I and you be born again, we cannot see the kingdom of GOD."

Wednesday 10. I preached at *Basing-shaw* church. Sat.  
13. I expounded to a large company at *Beach-lane*. Sund.  
14. After preaching at *Islington*, I expounded twice at Mr. *Sims's*, in the *Minories*.

Wednesday 17. I was with two persons, who I doubt are properly *enthusiasts*. For, first, they think to attain the end without the means, which is *enthusiasm*, properly so called. Again, they think themselves inspired by GOD, and are not. But false, imaginary inspiration is *enthusiasm*. That theirs is only imaginary inspiration appears hence, it contradicts the law and the testimony.

Sunday 21. We were greatly surprized in the evening, while I was expounding in the *Minories*. A well-drest, middle-aged woman, suddenly cried out, as in the agonies of death. She continued so to do for some time, with all the signs of the sharpest anguish of spirit. When she was a little recovered, I desired her to call upon me the next day. She then told me, that about three years before, she was under strong convictions of sin, and in such a terror of mind, that she had no comfort in any thing, nor any rest, day or night: that she sent for the minister of her parish, and told him the distress she was in: upon which he told her husband she was stark mad, and advised him to send for a physician immediately. A physician was sent for accordingly, who ordered her to be blooded, blistered, and so on. But this did not heal her wounded spirit. So that she continued much as she was before; till the last night, he whose words she at first found, to be *sharper than any two-edged sword*, gave her a faint hope, that he would undertake her cause, and heal the soul which had sinned against Him.

Thursday 25. I baptized *John Smith*, (late an Anabaptist) and four other adults at *Islington*. Of the adults I have known baptized lately, one only was at that time born again, in the higher sense of the word, that is, found a thorough, inward change, by the love of GOD shed abroad in her heart. Most of them were only born again in a lower sense,

sense, *i. e.* received the remission of their sins. And some (as it has since too plainly appeared) neither in one sense nor the other.

*Sunday 28.* I went (having been long importuned thereto) about five in the evening, with four or five of my friends to a house where was one of those commonly called *French prophets*. After a time, she came in. She seemed about four or five and twenty, of an agreeable speech and behaviour. She asked, why we came? I said, "to try the spirits, whether they be of GOD." Presently after she leaned back in her chair, and seemed to have strong workings in her breast, with deep sighings intermixt. Her head, and hands, and, by turns, every part of her body seemed also to be in a kind of convulsive motion. This continued about ten minutes, till (at six) she began to speak (though the workings, sighings and contortions of her body, were so intermixt with her words, that she seldom spoke half a sentence together) with a clear, strong voice, "Father, thy will, thy will be done. Thus saith the Lord, if of any of you that is a father, his child ask bread, will he give him a stone? If he ask a fish, will he give him a scorpion? Ask bread of me, my children, and I will give you bread. I will not, will not give you a scorpion. By this judge of what ye shall now hear."

She spoke much (all as in the person of GOD, and mostly in scripture words (of the fulfilling of the prophecies, the coming of Christ now at hand, and the spreading of the gospel over all the earth. Then she exhorted us not to be in haste, in judging her spirit, to be or not to be of GOD; but to wait upon GOD, and he would teach us, if we conferred not with flesh and blood. She added, with many enforcements, that we must watch and pray, and take up our cross, and *be still before GOD.*"

Two or three of our company were much affected, and believed she spoke by the Spirit of GOD. But this was in no wise clear to me. The motion might be either hysterical or artificial. And the same words any person of a good understanding and well versed in the scriptures might have spoken.



spoken. But I let the matter alone: knowing this, that *if it be not of GOD, it will come to nought.*

Sunday, Feb. 4. I preached at St. Giles's, on *Whoſoever believeth on me, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water.* How was the power of GOD preſent with us! I am content to preach here no more.

Friday 9. A note was given me at Wapping in (nearly) theſe words:

SIR,

**Y**OUR prayers are deſired for a child that is lunatick and ſore vexed day and night, that our Lord would be pleaſed to heal him, as he did thoſe in the days of his fleſh, and that he would give his parents faith and patience till his time is come.

Tueſday 13. I received the following note.

SIR,

**I** Return you hearty thanks for your prayers on Friday for my tortured Son. He grows worſe and worſe. I hope the nearer deliverance. I beg your prayers ſtill to our Redeemer, who will cure him, or give us patience to bear the rod, hoping it is dipped in the blood of the Lamb.

Sir, He is taken with grievous weeping, his heart beating as if it would beat through his ribs. He ſwells ready to burſt, ſweats great drops, runs about beating and tearing himſelf. He bites and pinches me, ſo that I carry his marks always on me. He lays his hands on the fire, and ſticks pins in his fleſh. Thus he has been theſe five years. He is in his 11th year, a wonder of affliction: I hope, of mercy alſo, and that I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is my Redeemer and my GOD.

Saturday 17. A few of us prayed with him; and from that time (as his parents ſince informed us) he had more reſt (although not a full deliverance) than he had had for two years before.

Sunday 18. I was deſired to preach at Sir George Wheeler's chapel, in Spittle-Fields, morning and afternoon. I did ſo in the morning, but was not ſuffered to conclude my ſubject (as I had deſigned) in the afternoon: a good remembrance,

brance, that I should, if possible, declare at *every* time, the *whole* counsel of GOD.

*Sunday 25.* I preached in the morning to a numerous congregation, at St. *Katherine's*, near the tower: at *Iffington* in the afternoon. Many here were (as usual) deeply offended. But the counsel of the Lord it shall stand.

*Friday, March 2.* It was the advice of all our brethren, that I should spend a few days at *Oxford*; whither I accordingly went on *Saturday 3.* A few names I found here also, who had not denied the faith, neither been ashamed of their Lord, even in the midst of a perverse generation. And every day we were together, we had convincing proof, such as it had not before entered into our hearts to conceive, that *he is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto GOD through him.*

[Continued at page 225.]

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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[Continued from page 141.]

4. “**P**ROVIDENCE,” says he, “visibly appointed me to that office, many years ago.” Is it any wonder then, that he should now be *in doubt*, whether he did right in confining himself to one spot? The more I reflect upon it, the more I am convinced, he had great reason to doubt of this. I can never believe it was the will of GOD, that such a burning and shining light should be *hid under a bushel*. No: instead of being confined to a country village, it ought to have shone in every corner of our land. He was full as much called to sound an alarm through all the nation as Mr. *Whitefield* himself. Nay, abundantly more so: seeing he was far better qualified for that important work. He had a more striking person, equal good-breed-  
ing



ing, an equally winning address: together with a richer flow of fancy, a stronger understanding: a far greater treasure of learning, both in languages, philosophy, philology, and divinity: and above all, (which I can speak with fuller assurance, because I had a thorough knowledge both of one and the other) a more deep and constant communion with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

5. And yet let not any one imagine, that I depreciate Mr. *Whitefield*, or undervalue the grace of GOD, and the extraordinary gifts, which his great master vouchsafed unto him. I believe he was highly favoured of GOD: yea, that he was one of the most eminent ministers, that has appeared in *England*, or perhaps in the world, during the present century. Yet I must own, I have known many fully equal to Mr. *Whitefield*, both in holy tempers and holiness of conversation: but one equal herein to Mr. *Fletcher*, I have not known, no not in a life of fourscore years.

6. However having chosen, at least for the present, this narrow field of action, he was more and more abundant in his ministerial labours, both in public and private; not contenting himself with preaching, but visiting his flock in every corner of his parish. And this work he attended to, early and late, whether the weather was fair or foul; regarding neither heat nor cold, rain nor snow, whether he was on horseback or on foot. But this farther weakened his constitution; which was still more effectually done, by his intense and uninterrupted studies: in which he frequently continued without scarce any intermission, fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen hours a day. But still he did not allow himself such food, as was necessary to sustain nature. He seldom took any regular meals, except he had company: otherwise twice or thrice in four and twenty hours, he ate some bread and cheese, or fruit. Instead of this, he sometimes took a draught of milk, and then wrote on again. When one reproved him, for not affording himself a sufficiency of necessary food, he replied, "not allow myself food! why our food seldom costs my housekeeper and me together less than two shillings a week."

7. "On

7. "On the tenth of May, 1774, (says Mr. *Vaughan*, to whom we are indebted for several of the preceding anecdotes) he wrote to me thus. "My brother has sent me the rent of a little place I have abroad, eighty pounds, which I was to receive from Mr. *Chauvet* and company, in *London*. But instead of sending the draught for the money, I have sent it back to *Switzerland*, with orders to distribute it among the poor. As money is rather higher there than here, that mite will go farther abroad than it would in my parish."

8. "In 1776," (proceeds Mr. *Vaughan*) "he deposited with me a bill of one hundred and five pounds, being (as I understood) the yearly produce of his estate in *Switzerland*. This was his fund for charitable uses : but it lasted only a few months, before he drew upon me for the balance, which was twenty-four pounds, to complete the preaching-house in *Madeley-wood*."

9. In the same year, his health being more than ever impaired by a violent cough, accompanied with spitting of blood (of which I had had large experience myself.) Having frequently seen the surprising effects of constant exercise, together with change of air : I told him, nothing was so likely to restore his health as a long journey. I therefore proposed his taking a journey of some months with me, through various parts of *England* and *Scotland* : telling him, "When you are tired, or like it best, you may come into my carriage : but remember, that riding on horseback, is the best of all exercises for you, so far as your strength will permit." He looked upon this as a call from Providence, and very willingly accepted of the proposal. We set out (as I am accustomed to do) early in the spring, and travelled by moderate journies, suited to his strength, which gradually increased, eleven or twelve hundred miles. When we returned to *London*, in the latter end of the year, he was considerably better. And I verily believe, if he had travelled with me, partly in the chaise, and partly on horseback, only a few months longer, he would have quite recovered his health. But this those about him would not permit : so be-



ing detained in *London*, by his kind, but injudicious friends, while I pursued my journies, his spitting of blood with all the other symptoms returned, and rapidly increased, till the physicians pronounced him to be far advanced in a true pulmonary consumption.

10. It being judged quite improper for him to remain in *London*,—on Dec. 16, 1776, he retired to the house of a friend, Mr. *Charles Greenwood* (now with GOD) in *Stoke-Newington*. Here he had the advice of the most eminent physicians that *London* could afford. He was also in a good air, and had every convenience and every help which art could bestow. One of the family, of whom I inquired concerning this part of his life, gave me the following information.

11. “ Agreeably to your desire, I endeavour to recollect some particulars of Mr. *Fletcher*, during his abode at *Newington*.

“ When he first came, he was, by Dr. *Fothergill*'s advice, under the strictest observance of two things, rest and silence. These, together with a milk diet, were supposed to be the only probable means of his recovery. In consequence of these directions he spoke exceeding little. If ever he spoke more than usual, it did not fail to increase his spitting of blood : of which indeed he was seldom quite clear, although it was not violent. Therefore a great part of his time was spent in being read to. But it was not possible to restrain him altogether from speaking. The fire which continually burned in his heart, many waters could not quench. It often burst out unawares. And then how did we wonder (like those who formerly heard his Lord) *at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth* ! He could not have sustained life, without sometimes giving vent to his heart. No penance could have appeared so severe a cross to him, as to be debarred from speaking of, or to GOD. His natural vivacity, with his intense love of Jesus, continually impelled him to speak. But on being reminded of his rule, with a cheerful smile, he was all submission ; consenting by signs only, to stir up those about him to pray and praise !

12. “ Who-

12. "Whoever has read Mr. *Fletcher's* last check to Antinomianism, and has had the privilege of observing his spirit and conduct, will not scruple to say, that he was a living comment on his own account of christian perfection. It is an alarming word which our Lord speaks *to the angel of the church of Sardis, I have not found thy works perfect before GOD.* But as far as man is able to judge, from the whole tenor of his behaviour, he did possess perfect humility, perfect resignation, and perfect love. Suitable to this was the testimony concerning him, which was given in Lady *Huntingdon's* chapel at *Bristol*, even by Mr. *V.* a gentleman strongly attached to those opinions, which Mr. *Fletcher* thought it his duty to oppose. "I have enjoyed the privilege of being several weeks under the same roof with dear Mr. *Fletcher.* And during that time I have been greatly edified by his perfect resignation to the will of GOD, and by being a witness to his exemplary conduct and uncommon grace."

13. "When he was able to converse, his favourite subject was, *The promise of the Father, the gift of the Holy Ghost,* including that rich, peculiar blessing, of union with the Father and the Son, mentioned in that prayer of our Lord, which is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St. *John.* Many were the sparks of living fire, which occasionally darted forth on this beloved theme. "We must not be content," said he, "to be only cleansed from sin : we must be filled with the Spirit." One asking him, what was to be experienced, in the full accomplishment of the promise? "O," said he, "what shall I say? All the sweetness of the drawings of the Father; all the love of the Son; all the rich effusions of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, more than ever can be expressed, are comprehended here! To attain it, the Spirit maketh intercession in the soul, like a GOD wrestling with a GOD!"

14. "It was in these favoured moments of converse, that we found in a particular manner, the reward which is annexed to the *receiving a prophet in the name of a prophet.* And in some of these he occasionally mentioned several circumstances,



stances, which (as none knew them but himself) would otherwise have been buried in everlasting oblivion.

“ One of those remarkable passages was, “ In the beginning,” said he, “ of my spiritual course, I heard the voice of GOD in an articulate, but inexpressibly awful sound, go through my soul in those words, *If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself.*” He mentioned another peculiar manifestation of a later date, “ in which,” said he, “ I was favoured like *Moses*, with a supernatural discovery of the glory of GOD, in an ineffable converse with him, face to face, so that whether I was then in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell.”

15. “ At another time he said, “ about the time of my entering into the ministry, I one evening wandered into a wood, musing on the importance of the office I was going to undertake. I then began to pour out my soul in prayer: when such a feeling sense of the justice of GOD fell upon me, and such a sense of his displeasure at sin, as absorbed all my powers, and filled my soul with the agony of prayer, for poor, lost sinners. I continued therein till the dawn of day; and I considered this as designed of GOD, to impress upon me more deeply the meaning of those solemn words, *Therefore knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men.*”

16. “ The blessed state of his soul continually manifested itself, by its overflowing good-will to all that came in his way. And yet his spirit was so deeply impressed with those words, *Not as though I had already attained*, that the vehemence of his desire for a fuller manifestation of GOD, seemed sometimes to border upon unhappiness. But his ardent soul only felt the full impression of those words of the apostle, *Forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those that are before; I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of GOD in Christ Jesus.*

17. “ One end of his retiring to Newington was, that he might hide himself from company. But this design was in no wise answered; for company came from every side. He was continually visited by high and low, and by persons

sons of various denominations : one of whom being asked, when he went away, what he thought of Mr. *Fletcher*, said, " I went to see a man that had one foot in the grave ; but I found a man that had one foot in heaven." Among them that now visited him, were several of his beloved and honoured opponents : to whom he confirmed his love (however roughly they had treated him) by the most respectful and affectionate behaviour. But he did not give up any part of the truth, for which he had publicly contended : although some (from whom one would have expected better things) did not scruple to affirm the contrary. Those of his particular friends who visited him here, will not easily forget how he exhausted his whole soul, in effusions of thankfulness ; Mrs. *Cartwright* and *Cavendish* in particular, with his faithful and affectionate friend Mr. *Ireland*, will remember their interviews with him. And those of the family were almost oppressed by the outpourings of his love and gratitude, whenever they shewed their love and care in the most inconsiderable instance. Yea, so thankful, in proportion would he be, to even the meanest servant.

18. " It was not without some difficulty, that Mr. *Ireland* at length prevailed upon him to sit for his picture. While the limner was drawing the outlines of it, he was exhorting both him and all that were in the room, not only to get the outlines drawn, but the colourings also of the image of Jesus on their hearts. He had a very remarkable facility, in making allusions of this kind ; in raising spiritual observations from every accidental circumstance ; in turning men's employments, pleasures and pains into means of edification ; this he did, in order to engage the attention of the thoughtless, the more deeply to fix the attention of the thoughtful ; and to prevent the trifling away of time in unprofitable conversation. And such little incidents as used to pass away unnoticed by almost any other person, acquired from Mr. *Fletcher*'s fine imagination a kind of grace and dignity. To give an instance. Being ordered to let blood, while his blood was running into the cup, he took occasion to expatiate on the precious blood-



blood-shedding of the Lamb of GOD. And even when he did not speak at all, the seraphic spirit which beamed from his languid face, during those months of pain and weakness, was

“ A lecture silent, yet of sovereign use.”

19. [But it is necessary to be observed, that this facility of raising useful observations from the most trifling incidents was one of those peculiarities in him, which cannot be proposed to our imitation. In him it partly resulted from nature, and was partly a supernatural gift. But what was becoming and graceful in Mr. *Fletcher*, would be disgusting almost in any other.]

20. “ One of those who visited him at *Newington*, was Mr. *William Perronet*; a pious, sensible and amiable young man, who was snatched hence in the bloom of youth. He often said, the first sight of Mr. *Fletcher* fixt an impression upon his mind, which never wore off, till it issued in a real conversion to GOD, ever accompanied with a most affectionate regard for the instrument of that happy change.”

Soon after he left *Newington*, he wrote the following letter.

May 28, 1777.

To My dear friends and benefactors, *Charles* and *Mary Greenwood*.

My prayer shall always be, that the merciful may find mercy, and that the great kindness I have found under your quiet roof, may be shewed you every where under the canopy of heaven. I think with grateful joy on the days of calm retreat I have been blest with at *Newington*, and lament my not having improved better the precious opportunity, of sitting, *Mary* like, at the feet of my great physician. May he requite your kind care of a dying worm, by abundantly caring for you and yours, and making all your bed in your sickness! May you enjoy full health! May you hunger and thirst after righteousness, and be abundantly filled therewith! May you sweetly rest in Christ! May his protection be as a wall of fire, round about you and yours! May his rod and staff comfort you, under all  
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the troubles of life, the decays of the body, the assaults of the enemy, and the pangs of death! May you stand in the clefts of the Rock of Ages, and be safely sheltered there, when all the storms of justice blow around! And may you always have such spiritual and temporal helps, friends and comforts, as I have found in your pleasing retreat. You have received a poor *Lazarus*, (though his sores were not visible:) you have had compassion, like the good Samaritan: you have admitted me to the enjoyment of your best things! And now what can I say? What but thanks be to GOD for his unspeakable gift: and thanks to my dear friends for all their favours. They will, I trust, be found faithfully recorded in my breast, when the great Rewarder of them that diligently seek him, will render to every man according to his works. And a raised *Lazarus* shall then appear in the gate, to testify of the love of *Charles* and *Mary Greenwood*, and their godly sister!

I was a little better: but I now spit blood, more than I have done for weeks past. Glory be to GOD for every providence! His will be done in me, by health or sickness, life or death. All from him is, and I trust, will be welcome to

Your obliged pensioner,

JOHN FLETCHER.

## CHAP. VI.

*From his leaving Newington, till his return from Switzerland to Madeley.*

1. **H**E continued with Mr. *Greenwood* at *Newington*, upwards of fifteen months. The physicians then advised him to make a trial of the *Hot-well* water, near *Bristol*. "I was desired by Mr. and Mrs. *Ireland*, (who took him down in April 1777) says Miss *Thornton*, to bear them company thither, which I willingly did. Indeed I looked upon it as a call from GOD: nor could I desire a greater honour, than



than to share in the employment of angels; in ministering to a distinguished heir of salvation. At *Bristol*, near *Bristol*, he continued in the same holy, earnest course as at *Newington*. Every day he drank the *Hot-well* water, and it agreed with him well. So that he appeared to gather a little strength: though not so swiftly as was expected. And all the strength which he received, he laid out in labours of love: for the benefit of all those, rich or poor, whom Providence cast in his way.

2. "Whenever he was in company, it was his general method, so far as his strength would admit, to pray particularly for every person present. And from his habitual prayer, resulted that life and energy in his words, which every one that was blest with his society felt more or less. Now and then likewise he ventured to pray in the family. But he was not wary enough in this. He more than once so much exerted himself, that he was brought very low. As soon as he was well enough to write, he was intent upon finishing two treatises for the press. The plan of *reconciliation*, in particular, lay very near his heart. He longed to conclude it before he died, which he wished to do, breathing peace to *Jerusalem*, and pointing out to the children of GOD, the most probable means of effecting it—of uniting together in the bonds of peace and love, all the true ministers and followers of Jesus."

3. From *Bristol* he wrote to a friend thus: "I thank GOD, I am not afraid of any evil tidings: my heart standeth fast, believing in the Lord; and desiring him to do with me just what pleases him. With respect to my body, my physician hopes I shall do well. And so I hope and believe too. For health or sickness, life or death, is best when the Lord sends it.

(Continued at page 235.)

*The JOURNAL of FRANCIS ASBURY, Bishop of the  
Methodist-Episcopal Church.*

From March 26, 1772, to April 14, 1773.

[Continued from Page 146.]

**S**ATURDAY, *July 4.* Went to *Burlington* in order to attend the execution of one *Smart*, a murderer; and declared to a great number of people under the goal-wall—*He healeth the broken in heart.* The poor criminal appeared penitent, behaved with great solidity and expressed a desire to leave the world.

Then returned to *Philadelphia*, gave an exhortation that night, and found the Lord's day a day of sweet peace.

Monday 6. Set out for *Burlington* again, and spent three days labouring among them. Many seemed much stirred up to seek the kingdom of GOD.

Thursday 9. Returned, and found some inward liberty in *Philadelphia*.

Saturday 11. Was a day of peace and love to my soul.

Lord's day 12. Went through the usual exercises of the day, and enjoyed some peace of mind. Our congregations here are small. They cannot bear the discipline and doctrine: but this does not move me.

Monday morning I preached with life, and long to be entirely pure. I humbly hope to see the time when GOD will enable me to live without inward sin—without evil desire.

Tuesday 14. Went to the *Ferseys*, and preached at friend *Turner's* to near 100 people, though in the time of harvest; and while preaching from these words, *Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord*; many felt the power of truth, when the darkness and its properties were explained. After describing true religion to about 100 souls, at *Jesse Chew's*, went on Wednesday to *Greenwich*, and felt much shut up while preaching to about the same number, on *Fear not little flock, &c.* I then proceeded to *Gloucester*, which is one of the dullest places I have seen



in this country. The same night proceeded to *Haddonfield*; and the next day preached at *Joseph Thorn's*, to a few attentive hearers, who seemed somewhat affected by the truths of GOD; especially one S—K—who was greatly concerned on account of his past life; as he had been much devoted to company and liquor. I felt afraid that his concern would not be permanent. However, he accompanied me to the ferry.

Friday 17. Returned to *Philadelphia* time enough for intercession, and found it a good time, both then, and at the evening-preaching.

Lord's day 19. After preaching in the morning, set off in the afternoon for *Trentown*, came thither on Monday by dinner time, and found life in preaching at night.

Monday, *July 20*. Met with brother *Sause*, from *New-York*, who informed me that I was to go to *York*; which was what I did not expect; but feel myself quite easy, not being fixed in any place. He gave me an account of Mr. W—'s good behaviour; though I fear after all, he will settle at *Bohemia*.

Wednesday, *July 22*. In meeting the small society, about 19 persons, I gave them tickets, and found it a comfortable time. They are a serious people; and there is some prospect of much good being done in this place. After preaching on Tuesday morning over the ferry, and in the evening at *Trentown*, I took leave of them on Wednesday morning and set off for *Philadelphia*. Left *Philadelphia* on the Lord's day evening after preaching on these words, *If I come again, I will not spare*; and on Monday met with brother *Boardman*. Went thence to *New-mills*, where I preached on Tuesday night, and Wednesday morning, and found the people there very affectionate; then returned to *Burlington* and found many friends from *Philadelphia*. We had power among us at night, and the next morning at 3, I set off for *Amboy*, and on the way had some conversation with one of *Jacob Behmen's* disciples. We came to the stage-house through much rain and bad roads, about 7 o'clock; thence we went to *Amboy* and took lodging at a tavern. Have been  
kept

kept in peace through this journey, felt great courage in the work of GOD, and go towards *York* in faith—The congregation at *Amboy* was small, and they appeared to be such as cared but little for the gospel; so that my hope of that place is but slender. On Saturday evening, I preached with some power, to a large congregation of rich and poor, from these words, *Even from the days of your fathers, ye have gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them: return unto me and I will return unto you.* After preaching with great liberty on the Lord's day, to many people at *P. Vanpelt's* and justice *Wright's*, on *Staten-Island*; I set off on Monday in a boat for *New-York*: and arriving about 5 o'clock, found Mr. *Wright*, who, that night, preached his farewell sermon; and told the people that he did not expect to see them any more. I have always dealt honestly with him, but he has been spoiled by gifts. He has been pretty strict in the society, but ended all with a general love-feast; which I think is undoing all he has done. However, none of these things move me. My mind is calm, and my soul under a comfortable sense of GOD; and am determined, by his grace, to keep on in the way of my duty, if it should be my lot to stand alone.

*August 4.* Felt life, and power, and renewed courage. Discovering the unfaithfulness of some who first spoil a man and then condemn him, I intend to keep such at a proper distance. In the love-feast this evening, I found that the living could not bear the dead. Mr. *Wright* rose up and spake as well as he could, against speaking with severe reflections on his brother. But all this does not move me. I know the man and his conversation.

*August 6.* Felt satisfaction and life in meeting the society last night; and spent this day in retirement.

Thursday 7. Preached in *York* from Phil. i. 24, 25. *To abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith.* Found liberty in my mind while addressing the people, and am determin-

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ed, in the strength of the Lord, to aim at promoting his glory; and seek nothing but him.

Friday 8. After preaching in the morning, found the Lord near, and had great peace at intercession. It pleases me much to see the people diligent in attending the word: and find myself favoured with liberty and the power of GOD in my labours among them; and humbly hope, that GOD will make known his power among this people, and drive Satan from them; and that we shall see good days in this place.

Saturday 9. Found a degree of life in my soul; and on the Lord's day had power, and light, and life, and love in speaking from those words, *Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.* The congregations are steady, and we look for the power of GOD both in our own souls and among the people. O my GOD, make bare thine arm! After preaching on the evening of the Lord's day, with some opening of heart, and to a full house, I met the society; and then set out on Monday morning, for *New Rochelle*, and preached the same night at friend *Devoe's*, about 30 miles from *York*.

Tuesday 12. My soul does not forget GOD; but my desire is still towards him, and the remembrance of his name. On Wednesday, found my mind somewhat engaged; but on Thursday, had some fears of coming short of eternal life. A cloud rested on my mind, which was occasioned by talking and jesting; I also feel at times tempted to impatience and pride of heart; but the Lord graciously blest me with life and power in preaching at night; and I afterwards found my mind fixed on GOD, and an earnest longing to be always holy in heart and life. After preaching on Friday at *New Rochelle*, from these words, *We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip*, set out for *York* on a bad horse, and met with indifferent fare on the road; but reached *York* on Saturday, and there received a letter from my father and friend Mr. Mather, who informed me of the preachers' returning to England. Preached also this evening

ing with some satisfaction, but found broken classes, and a disordered society, so that my heart is sunk within me; but it is still my desire to commit myself to GOD.

Monday 17. Preached in the morning, and then went to preach at *New-Town*, about 12 miles distant, in the evening. Friend *Sause* was in company with me, and we were obliged to lodge at a tavern; but we were more serious than usual, and spent our time in useful conversation. As it rained, we had but few people at preaching in the morning; we then returned to *York* about 10 o'clock. In this journey I have found my soul comfortable and alive to GOD, a sacred nearness to GOD, and power to withstand temptations; though in the afternoon of the next day, had cause to blame myself for trifling conversation at noon.

Lord's-day, *August* 17. This has been a day of distress to my soul. I was opposed for meeting the society, because one or two classes meet at that time; which seemed to me a very weak objection, inasmuch as those classes might meet at another time.

*August* 21. Preached this morning with great life in my soul, and feel a strong desire to be devoted to GOD, and more and more engaged to promote his glory both in heart and life. O that my soul could be more intimately and sweetly united to the Lord! In the evening preached with power; but have found my soul troubled within me on account of a party spirit which seems to prevail too much in this place. But they must answer for their own conduct. My business is, through the grace of GOD, to go straight forward, acting with honesty, prudence and caution, and than leave the event to him.

Lord's-day, *August* 24. Preached morning and evening, and had peace in my own soul. In the evening, met the society and read Mr. Wesley's letter.

Monday 25. Early in the morning we crossed the North-river, in order to go to *Staten Island*. Many people attended the word; but I know not what to make of them, for though they seem fond of hearing, yet they do not appear to be much affected. On Tuesday went to *Amboy*, and dined  
with



with a mixed company of Assembly-men, Church-men, Quakers, &c. many of them came to hear me in sport, but went away very still. On my return, preached at Mr. W——'s to many people; some of whom seemed to know but little of any thing good. On Thursday returned to York, and preached in the evening to many people, with some life. Friday my soul was kept in peace and love; and while preaching at night, both myself and others felt the power of GOD in our souls.

Saturday 30. Preached with liberty, and can rejoice in GOD my salvation, finding an increasing desire to live to him alone. Lord's-day 31. Found peace and life both morning and evening, and had many people: went also to church, and heard Dr. Oglevie preach on the divinity of Christ.

Tuesday, *September* 2. My heart was fixed to seek the Lord; and found some nearness to him, and life in my soul: preached also in the evening with some comfort.

Wednesday 3. Preached at 5, and found my soul this day fixed to do the will of GOD.

Thursday 4. Preached in the morning, and found this a blessed day. My soul was lively, and my heart was filled with holy thoughts of GOD, and felt a strong and pure desire to pray, and mourn, and long for GOD. In the evening preached from these words: *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father who is in heaven.*

Friday 5. Found my soul grieved at the discovery of such parties among the people. Who can find a faithful man?

Saturday, *Sept.* 6. Found peace in my soul, and held a meeting for the better ordering of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the society. In this meeting I propounded the following queries.

I. How often shall there be public preaching? Agreed, that it should be on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday nights, besides the Lord's day; and exhortation on Saturday night.

II. Shall we have morning preaching? This was agreed to.

III. Shall we have the Society-meetings private? This was doubted by some; but I insisted on it, from our rules and Mr. *Wesley's* last letter.

IV. Shall we make a weekly, and quarterly collection? Agreed.

V. Can any other means be devised to lessen the debt? The debt was £ 1100; but no other means could be found to relieve it.

VI. Ought we not to be more strict with disorderly persons? Very little was said in answer to this.

VII. Shall we have three stewards for the satisfaction of the society? The majority voted against it.

VIII. Are we as frugal as we can be? It was thought we were.

IX. Will the stewards meet me once a week? Agreed.

X. Do we endeavour to avoid all partiality in the things of GOD?

XI. Can we come at the balance of our accounts now, or soon? It was thought we could.

XII. Who will stand at the door? Not determined.

XIII. Shall we meet the society on *Sunday* nights? This was opposed by some. But I insisted upon it's being the best time; and at last it was agreed to for a season.

XIV. Who shall be the collectors? This was not determined, though debated.

XV. Can the preacher meet the children? Agreed.

XVI. Can we spread the books? There was but little said on this head, and it was left undetermined.

[Continued at page 245.]

## LETTERS, &c.

*An account of the death of Mr. HADDEN, Inn-keeper in Bath: in a letter to the Rev. J. Wesley, by Miss M. B.*

WITH joy I embrace the earliest opportunity of letting you know, that our dear brother *Hadden* is at last gone to paradise.

For



For some time before his death, he was endued with an uncommon degree of deadness to the world, freedom from anxiety, respecting his family, and resignation under continual pain and weakness.

In his long illness, he sought Jesus in good earnest, and deeply mourned his want of a clear sense of pardon. At last, the Lord gave it him some time before his death. He then said, "I firmly believe Jesus died for *me*: I could not say this a little while ago; but it now seems that I have faith enough, to go up into the clouds to meet my Saviour."

The next day, on his saying, "I have been in violent pain," I asked, how did you find your soul then? He answered, "All love! all glory." On my asking him, have you *now* any doubt concerning the forgiveness of your sins? he said, "No: none at all." On Saturday the third instant, he told the nurse that the angels would come for him at night, and so it proved.

After lying very still about an hour and a half, and, to all appearance, was just expiring, he raised himself up in his bed, and cried out, "My blessed Lord! Oh! blessed Jesus! There he is! there are the angels! cannot you see them? there is another come! Hallelujah! hallelujah! Oh what happiness is this! I have been upon *Mount Sion*! What a mercy is it, that I have my senses so perfect; that I may not say any thing to offend GOD! for nothing unholy can enter heaven. Hallelujah! Sing! sing! hallelujah! Oh! how happy am I! What! a publican! a publican happy! a publican going to heaven! it ought, it ought to be put in the newspaper! Poor Mr. *Brookman*, (another inn-keeper of his acquaintance) what will he do when he comes to die? Tell him, tell him, bring it round to him some way or other; Lord Jesus! open his eyes before it is too late!" Then looking round on us, he said, "GOD bless you all! keep close to GOD and his people." To me he said, "I see the devil up against the cieling." On my saying, he has no power over *you*; he answered, with an air of triumphant disdain "Power! no! fly satan, get thee hence! Hallelujah! hallelujah!" Thus he continued till he fell into  
a doze.

a doze. After lying some time, he clapped his hands together, looked up with a smiling countenance, and fell asleep in Jesus!

M. B.

*Bath, April 13, 1773.*

*An account of Mrs. VAUGHAN: written by her Son.*

**M**Y dear mother was first awakened by hearing the General Baptists, and was a member of Mr. *Brittain's* congregation for many years. She then walked in all the ordinances blameless, and was a great pattern of keeping the sabbath-day holy, and of family-prayer. In the last of these I shall never forget her strong cries and tears for her four children, with which she was left a widow.

I have often heard her say, "There is a way better than this I am now in, though I know it not. Lord, shew me the right way, and lead me in it!" At this time she had no thoughts of being a Methodist.

When I was convinced of sin, and had received a sense of pardon, she said, "This is the right way," and never rested till the Lord spoke peace and salvation to her soul.

As she sat at work one day, she was taken ill of a violent fever. In the beginning of her illness, she was in an extraordinary manner filled with joy in the Holy Ghost. Those who came to see her (being many) saw with wonder the mighty power of GOD. She clapped her hands, and said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth! and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet with these eyes I shall see GOD! Glory! glory! I once was as vile as *Mary Magdalen*, *Manassah*, yea, the very devil himself! though I did not live in any outward sin. But now I am made white in the blood of the Lamb! I shall praise him on *Mount Sion*, with all the redeemed for ever and ever! for ever and ever! Yes, my anchor is cast! cast on a rock, where I shall ever rest. Oh, when will *Gideon's* pitcher



break ! and let the lamp appear !” This she often repeated ; and to the last, never express the least doubt or fear.

Two days before she died, she exhorted me to cleave to GOD : and told me, I should drink of the cup of affliction in this world ; but added,

“ Our souls are in his mighty hand;  
And he will keep them still;  
And you and I shall surely stand,  
With Christ on *Sion's* hill.”

From this time, she had not a shadow of a doubt. Nor do I remember she once complained, although her affliction was very great !

The night before she died, she sang;

“ Come let us join our cheerful songs,  
With angels round the throne.”

When she was speechless, she several times endeavoured to sing. Though she had experienced deep convictions, and great temptations, when she was first awakened, she was now very composed, and free from all uneasiness. Satan seemed to have no power over her. She was indeed lost and swallowed up in GOD, her all in all !

About seven o'clock on Friday morning, she cried out, “ My Lord, and my GOD !” and gave up her spirit into the arms of Jesus, on October 1, 1772, and in the fifty-fifth year of her age.

E. VAUGHAN.

*North-Green, Jan. 12, 1787.*

*An extract of a letter from JAMES HAW, elder of the Methodist Episcopal church in America, to Bishop Asbury: written from Cumberland near Kentucke, about the beginning of the year 1789.*

*Honoured Sir,*

**G**OOD news from *Zion*—The work of GOD is going on rapidly in the new Western world. A glorious victory

victory the Son of GOD has gained; and he is still going on conquering and to conquer. Shout, ye angels! Hell trembles, and heaven rejoices daily over sinners that repent. At a quarter-meeting, held in *Burben* county, *Kentucke*, July 19, 20, 1788, the Lord poured out his spirit in a wonderful manner, first on the Christians, and sanctified several of them very powerfully and gloriously, and as I charitably hope, wholly. The seekers also felt the power and presence of GOD, and cried for mercy as at the point of death. We prayed with, and for them, till we had reason to believe that the Lord converted 17 or 18 precious souls. Hallelujah, praise ye the Lord.

As I went from that part, through the circuit, to another quarter-meeting, the Lord converted two or three more. The *Sat.* and *Sun.* following, the Lord poured out his spirit again; the work of sanctification amongst the believers broke out at the Lord's table; and the spirit of the Lord went through the assembly like a mighty rushing wind: some fell, many cried for mercy; sighs and groans proceeded from their hearts; tears of sorrow for sin ran streaming down their eyes; their prayers reached to heaven, and the spirit of the Lord entered into them, and filled 14 or 15 with peace and joy in believing. Salvation! O the joyful sound, how the echo flies! A few days after, brother *Poythress* came, and went with me to another quarter-meeting: we had another gracious season round the Lord's table, but no remarkable stir till after preaching; but under several exhortations some bursted out into tears, others trembled, and some fell. I sprang in among the people, and the Lord converted one more very powerfully, who praised the Lord with such acclamation of joy as, I trust, will never be forgotten. The *Sunday* following I preached my farewell-fermon, and met the class, and the Lord converted three more, glory be to his holy name for ever.

The first round I went in *Cumberland*, the Lord converted six precious souls, and I joined three gracious Baptists to our church: and every round, I have reason to believe, some sinners are awakened, some seekers joined to society,  
and



and some penitents converted to GOD. At our *Cumberland* quarter-meeting, the Lord converted six souls the first day, and one the next: glory, honour, praise, and power, be unto our GOD for ever. The work still goes on. I have joined two more serious Baptists, since the quarter-meeting, and the Lord has converted several more precious souls in various parts of the circuit, and some more have joined the society, so that we have 112 disciples now in *Cumberland*, 47 of whom (I trust) have received the gift of the Holy Ghost since they believed: and I hope these are but the first fruits of an universal harvest, which GOD will give us in this country. Brother *Maffie* is with me, going on weeping over sinners, and the Lord blesses his labours. A letter from brother *Williamson*, dated *Nov. 10, 1788*, informs me that the work is still going on rapidly in *Kentucke*; that at two quarter-meetings since I came away, the Lord poured out his spirit and converted 10 penitents, and sanctified five believers at the first, and 20 more were converted at the second. Indeed the wilderness and solitary places are glad, and the desert rejoices, and blossoms as the rose, and I trust will soon become beautiful as *Tirza*, and comely as *Jerusalem*. What shall I more say? Time would fail to tell you all the Lord's doings amongst us; it is marvellous in our eyes. To him be glory, honour, praise, power, might, majesty and dominion, both now and for ever, amen and amen.

P. S. Some of our responsible members of *Cumberland* have formerly lived at a place called the *Natchez*, on the *Mississippi*, then under the British, now under the government of *Spain*. There are (they say) 6 or 700 American families there, who have no protestant minister of any kind, and I fear, are perishing for want of the bread of life. I expect to know by the spring, if there be free and full toleration for the protestant religion there, and if there be, to make the report to the conference.

POETRY.

## Poetry.

### *On the Shortness of HUMAN LIFE.*

**L**IKE as a damask rose you see,  
 Or like the blossoms on a tree,  
 Or like the frag'rant flowers in May,  
 Or like the morning to the day,  
 Or like the sun, or like the shade,  
 Or like the gourd which *Jonah* had :  
 E'en such is man, whose thread is spun,  
 Drawn out, and cut, and so it's done ;  
 Withers the rose, the blossom blasts,  
 The flower fades, the morning hastes,  
 The sun doth set, the shadows fly,  
 The gourd consumes, and mortals die !

Like to the grass that's newly sprung,  
 Or like the tale that's just begun,  
 Or like a bird that's here to-day,  
 Or like the pearled dew of May,  
 Or like an hour, or like a span,  
 Or like the singing of a swan :  
 E'en such is man, who lives by breath ;  
 Is here ; is there ; in life ; in death !  
 The grass decays, the tale doth end,  
 The bird is flown, the dews ascend,  
 The hour is short, the span not long,  
 The swan's near death ! man's life is done !

Like to a bubble on a brook,  
 Or (in a mirror) like a look,  
 Or like a shuttle in the hand,  
 Or like a writing on the sand,



Or like a thought, or like a dream,  
 Or like the gliding of a stream :  
 E'en such is man, whose life by breath ;  
 Is here ; is there ; in life, in death !  
 The bubble's burst ; the look's forgot ;  
 The shuttle's flung ; the writing blot ;  
 The thought is past ; the dream is gone ;  
 The water glides—man's life is done !



*The BENEFIT of AFFLICTION, Job v. 6, 7, 8.*

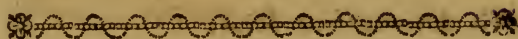
**W**HEN huge afflictions press me down,  
 And sorrows make my nature groan,  
 Where shall I find relief ?  
 I'll bow myself before my GOD,  
 And humbly kiss the sacred rod,  
 Till he assuage my grief.

My num'rous sins will I confess,  
 And own in every sore distress  
 The Lord is good and just :  
 For by experience I have found  
 Afflictions spring not from the ground,  
 Nor troubles from the dust.

So sure as sparks from burning fire,  
 By native force will still aspire,  
 And upward wing their way ;  
 So surely man is born to pain ;  
 Our common lot is to complain,  
 While here on earth we stay.

Nor is the cause so hard to tell,  
 Since from the Lord we basely fell,  
 And left the source of bliss :  
 How can we hope for joys serene,  
 While sin, the monster, lurks within,  
 That parent of distress ?

To Jesus then I make my moan:—  
 O, plead my cause before the throne!  
 Thou hast the Father's ear:  
 Since thou for me didst undertake,  
 My suit is gain'd—thy blood did make  
 Atonement at his bar.



### A LAWYER'S PRAYER.

**O**RDAIN'D to tread the thorny ground  
 Where few, I fear, are faithful found,  
 Mine be the conscience void of blame,  
 The upright heart, the spotless name,  
 The tribute of the widow's prayer,  
 The righted orphan's grateful tear:  
 To virtue and her friends a friend,  
 Still may my voice the weak defend.  
 Ne'er may my prostituted tongue  
 Protect th' oppressor in his wrong,  
 Nor wrest the spirit of the laws,  
 To sanctify the villain's cause.  
 Let others with unsparing hand  
 Scatter their poison through the land;  
 In flame dissention, kindle strife,  
 And strew with ills the path of life.  
 On such her gifts let fortune shower,  
 Add wealth to wealth, and power to power:  
 On me may fav'ring heaven bestow  
 That peace which good men only know;  
 The joy of joys, by few possess'd,  
 Th' eternal sun-shine of the breast.  
 All earthly good I here resign,  
 The praise of honesty be mine;  
 That friends may weep, the worthy sigh,  
 And poor men bless me when I die.



*A prayer for one grievously tempted.*

JESUS, the promise made by thee  
We plead, and touching this agree,  
To ask it for our friend;  
The help thou only canst bestow,  
Deliverance from her cruel foe,  
A swift deliverance send.

The virtue of thy saving name,  
To-day, as yesterday the same,  
In her relief exert;  
The fiend who dares thy temple seize,  
No longer suffer him t' oppress,  
But bid him now depart.

Thou canst with equal ease make whole  
The body and the sin-sick soul,  
Physician of mankind:  
Thy patient, Lord, at once restore,  
Fill'd with the spirit of love and power,  
And of a healthful mind.

Cloth'd with humility and grace,  
Thy sav'd, thy happy handmaid place  
Attentive at thy feet;  
And never may she thence remove,  
Till spotless in thy sight above  
She finds her joy complete.

T H E

# Arminian Magazine,

For M A Y 1790.



## PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED.

[BY JOHN WESLEY, M. A.]

*That to the height of this great argument  
I may assert eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God with man.* MILTON.

I. I AM inclined to believe, that many of those who enjoy the faith which worketh by love, may remember some time when the power of the Highest wrought upon them in an eminent manner; when the voice of the Lord laid the mountains low, brake all the rocks in pieces, and mightily shed abroad his love in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto them. And at that time, it is certain they had no power to *resist* the grace of GOD. They were then no more able to stop the course of that torrent which carried all before it, than to stem the waves of the sea with their hand, or to stay the sun in the midst of heaven.

II. And the children of GOD may continually observe, how his love leads them on from faith to faith; with what tenderness he watches over their souls; with what care he brings them back if they go astray, and then upholds their going in his path, that their footsteps may not slide. They

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cannot but observe, how unwilling he is, to let them go from serving him: and how, notwithstanding the stubbornness of their wills, and the wildness of their passions, he goes on in his work, conquering and to conquer, till he put all his enemies under his feet.

III. The further this work is carried on in their hearts, the more earnestly do they cry out, *Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name give the praise, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake.* The more deeply are they convinced, that *by grace we are saved; not of works, lest any man should boast*: that we are not pardoned and accepted with GOD, for the sake of any thing we have done, but wholly and solely for the sake of Christ, of what he hath done and suffered for us. The more assuredly likewise do they know that the condition of this acceptance is faith alone: before which gift of GOD no good work can be done, none which hath not in it the nature of sin.

IV. How *easily* then may a believer infer, from what he hath experienced in his own soul, that the true grace of GOD *always* works *irresistibly* in every believer: that GOD will finish wherever he has begun this work, so that it is *impossible* for any believer to *fall from grace*: and lastly, that the reason why GOD gives this to some only, and not to others, is because of his own will: without any previous regard either to their faith or works, he hath *absolutely, unconditionally predestinated* them to life, before the foundation of the world.

V. Agreeable hereto, in the Protestant confession of faith, drawn up at *Paris*, in the year 1559, we have these words: Article 12.

“ We believe, that out of the general corruption and condemnation in which all men are plunged, GOD draws those whom in his eternal and unalterable counsel he has elected by his goodness and mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ, without considering their works, leaving the others in the same corruption and condemnation.”

VI. To

VI. To the same effect speak the Dutch divines, assembled at *Dort*, in the year 1618. Their words are: Article 6. *et seq.*

“Whereas, in process of time, GOD bestowed faith on some, and not on others, this proceeds from his eternal decrees.—According to which he softens the hearts of the elect, and leaveth them that are not elect in their wickedness and hardness.

“And herein is discovered the difference put between men equally lost, that is to say, the decree of Election and Reprobation.

“Election is, the unchangeable decree of GOD, by which, before the foundation of the world, he hath chosen in Christ unto salvation a set number of men. This Election is one and the same of all who are to be saved.

“Not all men are elected, but some are not elected; whom GOD in his unchangeable good-pleasure hath decreed to leave in the common misery, and not to bestow saving faith upon them; but leaving them in their own ways, at last to condemn and punish them everlastingly for their unbelief, and also for their other sins. And this is the decree of Reprobation.”

VII. Likewise, in the confession of faith set forth by the assembly of English and Scotch divines, in the year 1646, are these words, chap. iii.

“GOD from all eternity did unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.

“By the decree of GOD, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death.

“These angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

“Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, GOD, before the foundation of the world — hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory — without any foresight of faith or good works.

“The



“ The rest of mankind, GOD was pleased — for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath.”

No less express are Mr. *Calvin's* words, in his *Christian Institutions*, chap. xxi. sect. 1.

“ All men are not created for the same end; but some are fore-ordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation. So according as every man was created for the one end or the other, we say, he was *elect*ed, i. e. predestinated to life, or *reprob*ated, i. e. predestinated to damnation.”

VIII. Indeed there are some who assert the decree of Election, and not the decree of Reprobation. They assert, that GOD hath by a positive, unconditional decree, chosen some to life and salvation: but not that he hath by any such decree, devoted the rest of mankind to destruction. These are they to whom I would address myself first: and let me beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of GOD, to lift up your hearts to him, and to beg of him to free you from all prepossession, from the prejudices even of your tender years, and from whatsoever might hinder the light of GOD from shining in upon your souls: let us calmly and fairly weigh these things, in the balance of the sanctuary; and let all be done in love and meekness of wisdom, as becomes those who are fighting under one Captain, and who humbly hope they are joint-heirs through him of the glory which shall be revealed.

I am verily persuaded, that in the uprightness of your heart, you defend the decree of unconditional Election: even in the same uprightness wherein you reject and abhor that of unconditional Reprobation. But consider, I entreat you, whether you are consistent with yourselves; consider, whether this Election can be separate from Reprobation; whether one of them does not imply the other, so that in holding one, you must hold both.

IX. That this was the judgment of those who had the most deeply considered the nature of these decrees, of the  
assembly

assembly of English and Scotch divines, of the reformed churches both in *France* and the *Low-Countries*, and of Mr. *Calvin* himself, appears from their own words, beyond all possibility of contradiction. “ Out of the general corruption” (saith the French church) “ he draws those whom “ he hath elected ; leaving the others in the same corruption, according to his immoveable decree.” “ By the “ decree of GOD” (says the assembly of English and Scotch divines) “ some are predestinated unto everlasting “ life, others, fore-ordained to everlasting death.” “ GOD “ hath once for all” (saith Mr. *Calvin*) “ appointed, by “ an eternal and unchangeable decree, to whom he would “ give salvation, and whom he would devote to destruction.” *Inst.* cap. iii. sect. 7. Nay, it is observable, Mr. *Calvin* speaks with utter contempt and disdain of all, who endeavour to separate the one from the other, who assert Election without Reprobation. “ Many” (says he) “ as “ it were to excuse GOD, own Election, and deny Reprobation. But this is quite silly and childish. For “ Election cannot stand without Reprobation. Whom “ GOD passes by, those he reprobates. It is one and the “ same thing.” *Inst.* l. 3. c. 23. sect. 1.

X. Perhaps, upon deeper consideration, you will find yourselves of the same judgment. It may be, you also hold Reprobation, though you know it not. Do not you believe, that GOD who made *one vessel unto honour*, hath made *another unto eternal dishonour* ? Do not you believe, that the men who *turn the grace of our GOD into lasciviousness*, were before ordained of GOD unto this condemnation ? Do not you think, that *for this same purpose*, GOD raised Pharaoh up, that he might shew his sovereign power in his destruction ? And that *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*, refers to their eternal state ? Why then you hold absolute Reprobation ; and you think *Esau* and *Pharaoh* were instances of it : as well as all those vessels made unto dishonour, those men before ordained unto condemnation.



XI. To set this matter in a still clearer light, you need only answer one question. Is any man saved, who is not elected? Is it possible, that any not elected, should be saved? If you say, No, you put an end to the doubt. You espouse Election and Reprobation together. You confirm Mr. *Calvin's* words, that "without Reprobation, Election itself cannot stand." You allow, though you were not sensible of it before, that "whom GOD elects not, them he reprobates.."

Try whether it be possible, in any particular case, to separate Election from Reprobation. Take one of those who are supposed not to be elected; one whom GOD hath not chosen unto life and salvation. Can this man be saved from sin and hell? You answer, "No."—Why not? "Because he is not elected. Because GOD hath unchangeably decreed, to save so many souls and no more; and he is not of that number. Him GOD hath decreed to pass by; to leave him to everlasting destruction: in consequence of which irresistible decree, the man perishes everlastingly." O, my brethren, how small is the difference between this and a broad, bare-faced reprobation.

XII. Let me entreat you to make this case your own. In the midst of life you are in death; your soul is dead while you live, if you live in sin, if you do not live to GOD. And who can deliver you from the body of this death? Only the grace of GOD in Jesus Christ our Lord. But GOD hath decreed to give this grace to others only, and not to you: to leave *you* in unbelief and spiritual death, and for that unbelief to punish you with death everlasting. Well then mayest thou cry, even till thy throat is dry, "O wretched man that I am!" For an unchangeable, irresistible decree standeth between thee and the very possibility of salvation. Go now, and find out how to split the hair, between thy being reprobated, and not-elected: how to separate Reprobation, in its most effectual sense, from unconditional Election.

XIII. Acknow-

XII. Acknowledge then, that you hold Reprobation. Avow it in the face of the sun. To be consistent with yourself you must openly assert, that “without Reprobation *this* Election cannot stand.” You know it cannot. You know if GOD hath fixed a decree, that *these men only* shall be saved, in such a decree it is manifestly implied, that *all other men* shall be damned. If GOD hath decreed, that *this* part of mankind, and no more, shall live eternally, you cannot but see, it is therein decreed, “that *the other part* shall never see life.” O, let us deal ingenuously with each other! What we really hold, let us openly profess. And if Reprobation be the truth, it will bear the light; for *the word of our GOD shall stand for ever.*

XIV. Now then, without any extenuation on the one hand, or exaggeration on the other, let us look upon this doctrine (call it what you please) naked, and in its native colour. Before the foundations of the world were laid, GOD of his own mere will and pleasure, fixed a decree concerning all the children of men who should be born unto the end of the world. This decree was unchangeable with regard to GOD, and irresistible with regard to man. And herein it was ordained, that one part of mankind should be saved from sin and hell, and all the rest left to perish for ever and ever, without help, without hope. That none of these should have that grace, which alone could prevent their dwelling with everlasting burnings, GOD decreed for this cause alone, “because it was his “good pleasure:” and for this end, “to shew forth his “glorious power, and his sovereignty over all the “earth.”

XV. Now can you, upon reflection, believe this? Perhaps you will say. “I do not think about it.” That will never do. You not only think about it (though it may be, confusedly) but speak about it too, whenever you speak of unconditional Election. You do not think about it! What do you mean? Do you never think about *Esau* or *Pharaoh*? Or in general, about a *certain number* of souls, whom *alone*  
GOD



GOD hath decreed to save? Why in that very thought Reprobation lurks: it entered your heart the very moment *that* entered: it stays as long as that stays: and you cannot speak that thought without speaking of Reprobation. True, it is covered with fig-leaves, so that a heedless eye may not observe it to be there. But if you narrowly observe, unconditional Election cannot appear, without the cloven foot of Reprobation.

XVI. But do not the scriptures speak of *Election*? They say, *St. Paul* was “an *elect*ed or chosen vessel:” Nay, and speak of great numbers of men, as “*elect*,” according “to the fore-knowledge of GOD.” “You cannot therefore deny, there is such a thing as *Election*. And if “there be, what do you mean by it?”

I will tell you, in all plainness and simplicity. I believe it commonly means one of these two things; first, a divine appointment of some particular men, to do some particular work in the world. And this Election I believe to be not only personal, but absolute and unconditional. Thus *Cyrus* was *elect*ed to rebuild the temple, and *St. Paul*, with the twelve, to preach the gospel. But I do not find this to have any necessary connection with eternal happiness. Nay, it is plain, it has not: for one who is *elect*ed in this sense, may yet be lost eternally. *Have I not chosen* (elect<sup>d</sup>) *you twelve*? saith our Lord: *yet one of you hath a devil*. *Judas*, you see, was *elect*ed as well as the rest: yet is his lot with the devil and his angels.

[Continued at page 261.]

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## S E R M O N XVII.

On ROMANS XV. 2.

*Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.*

- I. **U**NDOUTEDLY the duty here prescribed is incumbent on all mankind: at least on every one of

of those, to whom are intrusted the oracles of GOD. For it is here enjoined to every one without exception, that names the name of Christ. And the person whom every one is commanded to please is *his neighbour*, that is, every child of man. Only we are to remember here, what the same apostle speaks upon a similar occasion. *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.* In like manner we are to please all men, if it be possible, as much as lieth in us: but strictly speaking, it is not possible: it is what no man ever did, nor ever will perform. But suppose we use our utmost diligence, be the event as it may, we fulfil our duty.

2. We may farther observe, in how admirable a manner the apostle limits this direction: otherwise, were it pursued without any limitation, it might produce the most mischievous consequences. We are directed to please them *for their good*: not barely for the sake of pleasing them, or pleasing ourselves: much less of pleasing them to their hurt, which is so frequently done: indeed continually done, by those who do not love their neighbour as themselves. Nor is it only their temporal good, which we are to aim at in pleasing our neighbour; but what is of infinitely greater consequence, we are to do it *for their edification*: in such a manner as may conduce to their spiritual and eternal good. We are so to please them, that the pleasure may not perish in the using, but may redound to their lasting advantage: may make them wiser and better, holier and happier, both in time and in eternity.

3. Many are the treatises and discourses which have been published on this important subject. But all of them that I have either seen or heard, were miserably defective. Hardly one of them proposed the right end: one and all had some lower design in pleasing men, than to save their souls, to build them up in love and holiness. Of consequence, they were not likely to propose the right means, for the attainment of that end. One celebrated tract of this kind, entitled *The Courtier*, was published in *Spain*, about two hundred years ago, and translated into various languages. But it has nothing to do with edification, and



is therefore quite wide of the mark. Another treatise, entitled *The Compleat Courtier*, was published in our country, in the reign of king *Charles* the Second, and (as it seems) by a retainer to his court: in this there are several very sensible advices, concerning our outward behaviour: and many little improprieties in word or action are observed, whereby men displease others without intending it: but this author likewise has no view at all to the spiritual or eternal good of his neighbour. Seventy or eighty years ago another book was printed in *London*, entitled *The Art of Pleasing*. But as it was wrote in a languid manner, and contained only common, trite observations, it was not likely to be of use to men of understanding, and still less to men of piety.

4. But it may be asked, Has not the subject been since treated of by a writer of a very different character? Is it not exhausted, by one who was himself a consummate master of the art of pleasing? And who writing to one he tenderly loved, to a favourite son, gives him all the advices which his great understanding, improved by various learning, and the experience of many years, and much converse with all sorts of men, could suggest? I mean the late lord *Chesterfield*, the general darling of all the *Irish*, as well as the *English* nation.

5. The means of pleasing which this wise and indulgent parent continually and earnestly recommends to his darling child, and on which he doubtless formed both his tempers and outward conduct,

“ Till death untimely stopp'd his tuneful tongue,”

were, first, *Making love* (in the grossest sense) to all the married women, whom he conveniently could. (Single women he advises him to refrain from, for fear of disagreeable consequences.) Secondly, Constant and careful *disimulation*, always wearing a mask: trusting no man upon earth, so as to let him know his real thoughts, but perpetually seeming to mean what he did not mean, and seeming to be what he was not. Thirdly, Well-devised *lying* to all

all sorts of people, speaking what was farthest from his heart: and in particular *flattering* men, women, and children, as the infallible way of pleasing them.

It needs no great art to shew that this is not the way to please our neighbour *for his good*, or *to edification*. I shall endeavour to shew, that there is a better way of doing it; and indeed a way diametrically opposite to this. It consists

I. In removing hinderances out of the way, and

II. In using the means that directly tend to this end.

I. 1. I advise all that desire to *please their neighbour for his good to edification*, first, To remove all hinderances out of the way; or, in other words, to avoid every thing which tends to displease wise and good men, men of sound understanding and real piety. Now *cruelty, malice, envy, hatred, and revenge*, are displeasing to all wise and good men, to all who are endued with sound understanding and genuine piety. There is likewise another temper, nearly related to these, only in a lower kind, and which is usually found in common life; wherewith men in general are not pleased. We commonly call it *ill-nature*. With all possible care avoid all these; nay, and whatever bears any resemblance to them: as sourness, sternness, fullness, on the one hand; peevishness and fretfulness, on the other; if ever you hope to *please your neighbour for his good to edification*.

2. Next to cruelty, malice, and similar tempers, with the words and actions that naturally spring therefrom, nothing is more disgustful, not only to persons of sense and religion, but even to the generality of men, than *pride, haughtiness* of spirit, and its genuine fruit, an *assuming arrogant overbearing* behaviour. Even uncommon learning joined with shining talents, will not make amends for this: but a man of eminent endowments, if he be eminently haughty, will be despised by many, and disliked by all. Of this the famous master of *Trinity college in Cambridge*, was a remarkable instance. How few persons of his time had a stronger understanding or deeper learning than Dr. *Bentley*? And yet how few were less beloved? Unless one who was little, if at all inferior to him in sense or learning, and equally distant from humility, the author of the  
Divine



Divine Legation of *Moses*. Whoever therefore desires to please his neighbour for his good, must take care of splitting upon this rock. Otherwise the same pride which impels him to seek the esteem of his neighbour, will infallibly hinder his attaining it.

3. Almost as disgustful to the generality of men as *Haughtiness* itself, is a *passionate* temper and behaviour. Men of a tender disposition are afraid even to converse with persons of this spirit. And others are not fond of their acquaintance, as frequently (perhaps when they expected nothing less) meeting with shocks, which if they bear for the present, yet they do not willingly put themselves in the way of meeting with them again. Hence passionate men have seldom many friends; at least, not for any length of time. Crowds indeed may attend them for a season, especially when it may promote their interest. But they are usually disgusted one after another, and fall off like leaves in autumn. If therefore you desire lastingly to please your neighbour for his good, by all possible means avoid violent passion.

4. Yea, and if you desire to please, even on this account, take that advice of the apostle, *Put away all lying*. It is the remark of an ingenious author, that of all vices *lying* never yet found an apologist, that would openly plead in its favour, whatever his private sentiments might be. But it should be remembered, Mr. *Addison* went to a better world, before Lord *Chesterfield's* letters were published. Perhaps his apology for it was the best that ever was, or can be made for so bad a cause. But after all, the labour he has bestowed upon it "has only semblance of worth; "not substance." It has no solidity in it; it is nothing better than a shining phantom. And as lying can never be commendable or innocent, so neither can it be pleasing: at least, when it is stript of its disguise, and appears in its own shape. Consequently it ought to be carefully avoided by all those who wish to please their neighbour for his good to edification.

5. But is not *flattery*, a man may say, one species of lying? And has not this been allowed in all ages, to be  
the

the sure means of pleasing? Has not a late witty writer, in his “ Sentimental Journey,” related some striking instances of this? I answer, It is true. Flattery is pleasing for awhile, and that not only to weak minds: as the desire of praise, whether deserved or undeserved, is planted in every child of man. But it is pleasing only for awhile. As soon as the mask drops off, as soon as it appears that the speaker meant nothing by his soft words, we are pleased no longer. Every man’s own experience teaches him this. And we all know, that if a man continues to flatter, after his insincerity is discovered, it is disgustful, not agreeable. Therefore even this fashionable species of lying is to be avoided, by all that are desirous of pleasing their neighbour, to his lasting advantage.

6. Nay, whoever desires to do this, must remember, that not only *lying*, in every species of it, but even *disimulation*, (which is not the same with lying, though nearly related to it) is displeasing to men of understanding, though they have not religion. *Terence* represents even an old heathen, when it was imputed to him, as answering with indignation,

“ *Simulare non est meum.*”

“ Disimulation is no part of my character.”

Guile, subtlety, cunning, the whole art of deceiving, by whatever terms it is expressed, is not accounted an accomplishment by wise men; but is indeed an abomination to them. And even those who practise it most, who are the greatest artificers of fraud, are not pleased with it in other men, neither are fond of conversing with those that practise it on themselves. Yea, the greatest deceivers are greatly displeased at them that play their own arts upon them.

II. Now if cruelty, malice, envy, hatred, revenge, ill-nature; if pride and haughtiness; if irrational anger; if lying and disimulation, together with guile, subtlety, and cunning, are all and every one displeasing to all men, especially



cially to wise and good men, we may easily gather from hence, what is the sure way to please them for their good to edification. Only we are to remember, that there are those in every time and place, whom we must not expect to please. We must not therefore be surpris'd, when we meet with men, who are not to be pleas'd any way. It is now as it was of old, when our Lord himself complain'd, *Whereunto shall I liken the men of this generation? They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and saying to each other, We have piped unto you, but ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, but ye have not wept.* But leaving these froward ones to themselves, we may reasonably hope to please others, by a careful and steady observation of the few directions following.

1. First, Let *love* not visit you as a transient guest, but be the constant, ruling temper of your soul. See that your heart be fill'd at all times and on all occasions, with real, undissembled benevolence, not to those only that love you, but to every soul of man. Let it pant in your heart, let it sparkle in your eyes, let it shine in all your actions. Whenever you open your lips, let it be with love, and let there be in your tongue the law of kindness. Your word will then distil as the rain, and as the dew upon the tender herb. Be not straiten'd or limited in your affection, but let it embrace every child of man. Every one that is born of a woman, has a claim to your good-will. You owe this not to some, but to all. And let all men know, that you desire both their temporal and eternal happiness as sincerely as you do your own.

2. Secondly, If you would please your neighbour for his good, study to be *lowly* in heart. Be little and vile in your own eyes, in honour preferring others before yourself. Be deeply sensible of your own weaknesses, follies and imperfections: as well as of the sin remaining in your heart, and cleaving to all your words and actions. And let this spirit appear in all you speak or do: *Be clothed with humility.* Reject with horror that favourite maxim of the old heathen, sprung from the bottomless pit,

*Tanti*

*Tanti eris aliis, quanti tibi fueris :*

“ The more you value yourself, the more others will value you.” Not so: on the contrary, both GOD and man *resist the proud*: and as GOD *giveth grace to the humble*, so humility, not pride, recommends us to the esteem and favour of men, especially those that fear GOD.

3. If you desire to please your neighbour for his good to edification, you should, Thirdly, labour and pray, that you may be *meek*, as well as lowly in heart. Labour to be of a calm, dispassionate temper, *gentle* towards all men. And let the gentleness of your disposition appear in the whole tenor of your conversation. Let all your words and all your actions be regulated thereby. Remember likewise that advice of St. *Peter*. As an addition to your gentleness, *be merciful; be courteous; be pitiful*; be tenderly compassionate to all that are in distress, to all that are under any affliction, of mind, body, or estate. Let

“ The various scenes of human woe  
Excite your softest sympathy!”

Weep with them that weep. If you can do no more, at least mix your tears with theirs: and give them healing words, such as may calm their minds, and mitigate their sorrows. But if you can, if you are able to give them actual assistance, let it not be wanting. Be as eyes to the blind, as feet to the lame, a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless. This will tend greatly to conciliate the affection, and to give a profitable pleasure, not only to those who are immediate objects of your compassion; but to others likewise that *see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven*.

4. And while you are *pitiful* to the afflicted, see that you are *courteous* toward all men. It matters not, in this respect, whether they are high or low, rich or poor, superior or inferior to you: no, nor even whether good or bad, whether they fear GOD or not. Indeed the *mode* of shewing your courtesy may vary, as christian prudence will direct



rect. But the thing itself is due to all: the lowest and worst have a claim to our courtesy. But what is courtesy? It may either be inward or outward: either a temper, or a mode of behaviour: such a mode of behaviour as naturally springs from courtesy of heart. Is this the same with good-breeding, or *politeness*? (Which seems to be only a high degree of good-breeding.) Nay, good-breeding is chiefly the fruit of education; but education cannot give courtesy of heart. Mr. *Addison*'s well-known definition of politeness seems rather to be a definition of *this*. "A constant desire of pleasing all men, appearing through the whole conversation." Now this may subsist, even in a high degree, where there has been no advantage of education. I have seen as real courtesy in an *Irish* cabin, as could be found in *St. James's* or the *Louvre*.

5. Shall we endeavour to go a little deeper, to search into the foundation of this matter? What is the source of that desire to please, which we term courtesy? Let us look attentively into our own heart, and we shall soon find an answer. The same apostle that teaches us to *be courteous*, teaches us to *honour all men*. And his Master teaches me to love all men. Join these together, and what will be the effect? A poor wretch cries to me for an alms: I look, and see him covered with dirt and rags. But through these I see one that has an immortal spirit, made to know and love and dwell with GOD to eternity: I honour him for his Creator's sake. I see thro' all these rags, that he is purpled over with the blood of Christ. I love him for the sake of his Redeemer. The courtesy therefore which I feel and shew toward him, is a mixture of the honour and love, which I bear to the offspring of GOD, the purchase of his Son's blood, and the candidate for immortality. This courtesy let us feel and shew toward all men; and we shall please all men to their edification.

6. Once more. Take all proper opportunities of *declaring* to others the *affection* which you really feel for them. This may be done with such an air, and in such a manner, as is not liable to the imputation of flattery. And experience  
 shews,

shews, that honest men are pleased by this, full as much as knaves are by flattery. Those who are persuaded that your expressions of good-will toward them are the language of your heart, will be as well satisfied with them, as with the honest encomiums, which you could pass upon them. You may judge them by yourselves, by what you feel in your own breast. You like to be honoured: but had you not rather be beloved?

7. Permit me to add one advice more. If you would please all men for their good, at all events *Speak* to all men the very *truth* from your heart. When you speak, open the window in your breast: let the words be the very picture of your heart. In all company, and on all occasions, be a man of *veracity*, nay, be not content with bare veracity; but *in simplicity and godly sincerity, have all your conversation in the world, as an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.*

8. To sum up all in one word, If you would please men, please GOD! Let truth and love possess your whole soul. Let them be the springs of all your affections, passions, tempers; the rule of all your thoughts. Let them inspire all your discourse, continually seasoned with that salt, and *meet to minister grace to the hearers.* Let all your actions be wrought in love. *Never let mercy or truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck.* Let them be open and conspicuous to all: and *write them on the table of thy heart.* *So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of GOD and man.*

Castlebar, May 22, 1787.

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### AN EXTRACT

Of the Revd. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 183.]

ONE of the most surprising instances of his power which I ever remember to have seen, was on the Tuesday following; when I visited one who was above measure enraged



at *this new way*, and zealous in opposing it. Finding the argument to be of no other effect, than to inflame her more and more, I broke off the dispute, and desired we might join in prayer, which she so far consented to, as to kneel down. In a few minutes she fell into an extreme agony, both of body and soul; and soon after cried out with the utmost earnestness, "Now I know, I am forgiven for Christ's sake." Many other words she uttered to the same effect, witnessing a hope full of immortality. And from that hour, GOD hath set her face as a flint, to declare the faith which before she persecuted.

*Thursday 8.* I called upon her, and a few of her neighbours, who were met together in the evening, among whom I found a gentleman of the same spirit she had been of, earnestly labouring to pervert the truth of the gospel. To prevent his going on, as the less evil of the two, I entered directly into the controversy, touching both the cause and the fruits of justification. In the midst of the dispute, one who sat at a small distance, felt as it were the piercing of a sword, and before she could be brought to another house, whither I was going, could not avoid crying out aloud, even in the street. But no sooner had we made our request known to GOD, than he sent her help from his holy place.

At my return from hence, I found Mr. *Kinchin*, just come from *Dummer*, who earnestly desired me, instead of setting out for *London* the next morning (as I designed) to go to *Dummer* and supply his church on *Sunday*. On *Friday* morning I set out, according to his desire, and in the evening came to *Reading*, where I found a young man who had in some measure *known the powers of the world to come*. I spent the evening with him and a few of his serious friends; and it pleased GOD much to strengthen and comfort them.

*Saturday 10.* In the afternoon I came to *Dummer*; and on *Sunday* morning had a large and attentive congregation. I was desired to expound in the evening at *Basingstoke*. The next day I returned to *Reading*, and thence on *Tuesday* to *Oxford*, where I found many more and more re-  
joicing

joicing in GOD their Saviour. *Wednesday 14.* I had an opportunity of preaching once again to the poor prisoners in the *Castle*. *Thursday 15.* I fet out early in the morning, and in the afternoon came to *London*.

During my stay here, I was fully employed; between our own society, in *Fetterlane*, and many others, where I was continually desired to expound: so that I had no thought of leaving *London*, when I received (after several others) a letter from Mr. *Whitefield*, and another from Mr. *Seward*, intreating me in the most pressing manner, to come to *Bristol* without delay. This I was not at all forward to do: and perhaps a little the less inclined to it (though I trust I do not count my life dear unto myself, so I may finish my course with joy) because of the remarkable scriptures which offered as often as we enquired, touching the consequence of this removal: though, whether this was permitted only for the trial of our faith, GOD knoweth, and the event will shew. Till then, let me not be accounted superstitious, if I barely recite them in the same order as they occurred. \* *And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him (not till the time was come.)* † *Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?* ‡ *Get thee up into this mountain—and die in the mount, whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people.* || *And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days.* § *I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* \*\* *And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.*

*Wednesday 28.* My journey was proposed to our society in *Fetterlane*. But my brother *Charles* would scarce bear the mention of it; till appealing to the oracles of GOD, he received those words, as spoken to himself, and answered not again: *Son of man, behold I take from thee, the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet shalt thou not mourn or weep, neither shall thy tears run down.* Our other brethren how-  
ever

\* John vii. 44. † c. viii. 45, 46. ‡ Deut. xxxii. 49, 50.  
|| c. xxxiv. 8. § Acts ix. 16. \*\* c. viii. 2.



ever continuing the dispute, without any probability of their coming to one conclusion, we at length all agreed, to decide it by lot. And by this it was determined, "I should go." Several afterwards desiring we might open the bible, concerning the issue of this, we did so on the several portions of scripture, which I shall set down, without any reflection upon them. \* *Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.* † *When wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house, upon his bed: shall I not now require his blood at your hands, and take you away from the earth?* ‡ *And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem.*

Perhaps it may be a satisfaction to some, if before I enter upon this new period of my life, I give the reasons, why I preferred for so many years an university-life before any other: then especially, when I was earnestly pressed by my father, to accept of a cure of souls. I have here therefore subjoined the letter I wrote several years ago on that occasion:

Oxon, Dec. 10, 1734.

Dear Sir,

I. **T**HE authority of a parent and the call of Providence, are things of so sacred a nature, that a question in which these are any way concerned, deserves the most serious consideration. I am therefore greatly obliged to you, for the pains you have taken to set our question in a clear light; which I now intend to consider more at large with the utmost attention of which I am capable. And I shall the more chearfully do it, as being assured of your joining with me in imploring his guidance, who will not suffer those that trust in him, to seek death in the error of their life.

2. I entirely agree, "That the glory of GOD and the different degrees of promoting it, are to be our sole consideration

\* 2 Sam. iii. 1. † c. iv. 11. ‡ 2 Chron. xxviii. 27.

deration and direction in the choice of any course of life." And consequently, That it must wholly turn upon this single point, Which I ought to prefer, a college life, or that of the rector of a parish? I do not say, the glory of GOD is to be my *first* or my *principal* consideration: but my *only* one; since all that are not implied in this, are absolutely of no weight. In presence of this, they all vanish away: they are less than the small dust of the balance.

3. And indeed, till all other considerations were set aside, I could never come to any clear determination: till my eye was single, my whole mind was full of darkness. Whereas so long as it is fixed on the glory of GOD, without any other consideration, I have no more doubt of the way wherein I should go, than of the shining of the mid-day sun.

4. Now that life tends most to the glory of GOD, wherein we most promote holiness in ourselves and others. I say, in ourselves *and* others; as being fully persuaded, that these can never be put asunder. And if not, then whatever state is best on either of these accounts, is so on the other likewise. If it be, in the whole, best for others, so it is for ourselves: if it be best for ourselves, it is so for them.

5. However, when two ways of life are proposed, I would choose to consider first, which have I reason to believe, will be best for *my own soul*? will most forward *me* in holiness? By holiness meaning, not fasting (as you seem to suppose) or bodily austerities; but The mind that was in Christ, A renewal of soul in the image of GOD. And I believe the state wherein I am, will most forward me in this, because of the peculiar advantages I now enjoy.

6. The first of these is, daily converse with my friends. I know no other place under heaven, where I can have some always at hand of the same judgment, and engaged in the same studies: persons who are awakened into a full conviction, that they have but one work to do upon earth; who see, at a distance, what that one work is, even the recovery



recovery of a single eye and a clean heart; who, in order to this, have according to their power, absolutely devoted themselves to GOD, and follow after their Lord, denying themselves and taking up their cross daily. To have even a small number of such friends, constantly watching over my soul, and administering, as need is, reproof or advice with all plainness and gentleness, is a blessing I know not where to find, in any other part of the kingdom.

7. Another blessing which I enjoy here, in a greater degree than I could expect elsewhere, is retirement. I have not only as much, but as little company as I please. Trifling visitants I have none. No one takes it into his head, to come within my doors, unless I desire him, or he has business with me. And even then, as soon as his business is done, he immediately goes away.

8. Both these blessings are greatly endeared to me when I spend but one week out of this place. The far greatest part of the conversation I meet with abroad, even with the better sort of men, turns on points that are quite wide of *my* purpose, that no way forward the end of *my* life. Now, if they have time to spare, I have not. It is absolutely needful for such an one as me, to follow with all possible care and vigilance that wise advice of Mr. *Herbert*;

“ Still let thy mind be bent; still plotting how

“ And when and where the business may be done.”

And this, I bless GOD, I can in some measure do, while I avoid that bane of all religion, the company of *good sort of men*, as they are called; persons who have a *liking* to, but no *sense* of religion. But these insensibly undermine all my resolution, and steal away what little zeal I have. So that I never come from among these saints of the world (as *John Valdesso* terms them) faint, dissipated, and shorn of all my strength, but I say, “ GOD deliver me from a half-christian.”

9. Freedom from care is yet another invaluable blessing. And where could I enjoy this as I do now? I *hear* of such a thing

a thing as the cares of the world; but I *feel* them not. My income is ready for me on so many stated days: all I have to do is, to carry it home. The grand article of my expence is food. And this too is provided without any care of mine. The servants I employ are always ready on quarter-day; so I have no trouble on their account. And what I occasionally need to buy, I can immediately have, without any expence of thought. Here therefore I can be *without carefulness*. I can *attend upon the Lord without distraction*. And I know what a help this is to the being *holy both in body and spirit*.

10. To quicken me in making a diligent and thankful use of these peculiar advantages, I have the opportunity of communicating weekly, and of public prayer twice a day. It would be easy to mention many more, as well as to shew many disadvantages, which one of greater courage and skill than me, could scarce separate from the way of life you speak of. But whatever others could do, I could not. I could not stand my ground one month, against intemperance in sleep, self-indulgence in food, irregularity in study: against a general lukewarmness in my affections, and remissness in my actions, against a softness directly opposite to the character of a good soldier of Jesus Christ. And then, when my spirit was thus dissolved, I should be an easy prey to every temptation. Then might the cares of the world and the desire of other things, roll back with a full tide upon me: and it would be no wonder, if while I preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away. I cannot therefore but observe, that the question does not relate barely to the *degrees* of holiness, but to the very *being* of it:

*Agitur de vita & sanguine Turni:*

The point is, Whether I shall or shall not work out my salvation? whether I shall serve Christ or *Belial*?

11. What still heightens my fear of this untried state, is that when I am once entered into it, I am entered irrecoverably, once for all;

*Vestigia*



*Vestigia nulla retrorsum.*

If I should ever be weary of the way of life I am now in, I have frequent opportunities of quitting it: but whatever difficulties occur in that, foreseen or unforeseen, there is no return, any more than from the grave. When I have once launched out into the unknown sea, there is no recovering my harbour. I must on, through whatever whirlpools, or rocks, or sands, though all the waves and storms go over me.

12. Thus much as to myself. But I cannot deny, "That we are not to consider ourselves alone; seeing GOD made us all for a social life, to which academical studies are only preparatory." I allow too, "That he will take an exact account of every talent which he has lent us, not to bury them, but to employ every mite we have received according to his will, whose stewards we are." I own also, "That every follower of Christ, is, in his proportion, the light of the world: that whosoever is such, can no more be concealed, than the sun in the midst of heaven; that if he is set as a light in a dark place, his shining must be the more conspicuous; that to this very end was his light given, even to shine on all around him:" and indeed, that "there is only one way to hide it, which is, to put it out." I am obliged likewise, unless I will be against the truth, to grant, "That there is not a more contemptible animal upon earth, than one that drones away life, without ever labouring to promote, either the glory of GOD, or the good of man; and that whether he be young or old, learned or unlearned, in a college or out of it;" yet granting "The superlative degree of contempt to be on all accounts due to a college-drone:" a wretch who has received ten talents, and employs none; that is not only promised a reward hereafter, but is also paid before-hand for his work, and yet works not at all. But allowing all this, and whatever else you can say (for I own, you can never say enough) against the drowsy ingratitude, the lazy perjury of those, who are commonly called, *harmless men*, a fair proportion  
of

of whom I must, to our shame, confess, are to be found in colleges: allowing this, I say, I do not apprehend, it concludes against a college life in general. For the abuse of it, does not destroy the use. Tho' there are some here who are the mere lumber of the creation, it does not follow that others may not be of more service to the world in this station than they could be in any other.

13. That I in particular, could, might (it seems) be inferred, from what has been shewn already, viz. That I may myself be holier here than any where else, if I faithfully use the blessings I enjoy. But to wave this, I have other reasons so to judge; and the first is, The plenteousness of the harvest. Here is indeed a large scene of various action. Here is room for charity in all its forms: there is scarce any possible way of doing good, for which here is not daily occasion. I can now only touch on the several heads. Here are poor families to be relieved. Here are children to be educated. Here are workhouses, wherein both young and old gladly received the word of exhortation. Here are prisons, and therein a complication of all human wants. And, lastly, here are the schools of the prophets. Of these in particular we must observe, that he who gains one, does thereby do as much service to the world, as he could do in a parish in his whole life. For his name is Legion: in him are contained all those who shall be converted to GOD by him. He is not a single drop of the dew of heaven, but a river to make glad the city of GOD.

14. "But *Epworth*," you say, "is a larger sphere of action than this. There I should have the care of two thousand souls." Two thousand souls! I see not how it is possible for such an one as me to take care of one hundred. Because the weight that is now upon me is almost more than I can bear, shall I increase it tenfold?

———*imponere Pelio Ossam*

*Scilicet, atq. Ossæ frondosum involvere Olympum!*



Would this be the way to help either myself or others up to heaven? Nay, the mountains I reared would only crush my own soul, and so make me utterly useless to others.

15. I need but just glance on several other reasons, why I am more likely to be useful here than elsewhere; as, because I have the advice of many friends in any difficulty, and their encouragement in any danger: because we have the eyes of multitudes upon us, who, even without designing it, perform the most substantial office of friendship; apprizing us, if we have already done any thing wrong, and guarding us against our ever doing so again: lastly, because we have a constant fund (which I believe this year will amount to near eighty pounds) to supply the bodily wants of the poor, and thereby open a way for their souls to receive instruction.

16. If you say, "The love of the people of *Epworth* to me, may balance these advantages?" I ask, how long will it last? Only till I come to tell them plainly, that their deeds are evil; and particularly to apply that general sentence, to say to each, Thou art the man! Alas, Sir, do not I know, what love they had to you once? And how have many of them used you since? Why, just as every one will be used, whose business it is to bring light to them that love darkness.

17. Notwithstanding, therefore, their present prejudice in my favour, I cannot see that I am likely to do that good either at *Epworth* or any other place, which I may hope to do in *Oxford*. And yet one terrible objection lies in the way. "Have you found it so in fact? What have you done there in fourteen years? Have not your very attempts to do good there, for want either of a particular turn of mind for the business you engaged in, or of prudence to direct you in the right method of doing it, been always unsuccessful? Nay, and brought such contempt upon you as has in some measure disqualified you for any future success? And are there not men in *Oxford*, who are not only better and holier than you, but

“ but who having preserved their reputation, and being  
 “ univerfally eſteemed, are every way fitter to promote  
 “ the glory of GOD in that place?”

[*Continued at page 280.*]

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[*Continued from page 192.*]

“ **I** AM in hopes of ſeeing you ſoon: though my friends  
 talk of detaining me, to make a farther trial of the  
 waters. I am forbid preaching: but, bleſſed be GOD, I  
 am not forbid by my heavenly Phyſician, to pray, believe,  
 and love. This is a ſweet work, which heals, ſtrengthens,  
 and delights: let us do it, till we have recovered our ſpi-  
 ritual ſtrength. And then, whether we ſhall be ſeen on  
 earth or not, it will be all alike.

“ O be hearty in the cauſe of religion. Be either hot  
 or cold. It is a fearful thing to be lukewarm, and thereby  
 fall into the hands of the living GOD! Be humbly zeal-  
 ous for your own ſalvation and for GOD’s glory. And  
 forget not to care for each other’s ſalvation. The caſe of  
 wicked *Cain* is very common: the practice of many ſays  
 with that wretch, *Am I my brother’s keeper?* O pray GOD  
 to keep you by his mighty power through faith unto ſal-  
 vation. Keep yourſelves in the love of GOD and keep  
 one another, by example, reproof, exhortation, encour-  
 agement, ſocial prayer, and a faithful uſe of all the means  
 of grace. Uſe yourſelves to bow at Chriſt’s feet as your  
 prophet. Go to him continually for the holy anointing of  
 his ſpirit, who will be a teacher always near, always with  
 you and in you. If you have that inward inſtructor, you  
 will ſuffer no material loſs, though your outward teachers  
 ſhould be removed.

“ While you have the light of GOD’s word, believe in  
 the light, that ye may be the children of the light, fitted  
 for



for the kingdom of eternal light! Where I charge you, prepare to meet with joy

Your affectionate, though unworthy

Brother and minister,

JOHN FLETCHER."

4. I subjoin part of a letter wrote some time before in the same spirit to his parishioners at *Madeley*.

Dec. 28, 1776.

" My dear parishioners,

" The weakness of my body confining me from you, I humbly submit to the Divine dispensation. And I ease the trouble of my absence from you, by being present with you in spirit, and by reflecting on the pleasure I have felt in years past, in singing with you, *Unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given*. This truth let us receive with all readiness, and we shall meet in Christ, the center of lasting union. And our hearts shall be full of the song of angels, *Glory be unto GOD in the highest! On earth peace! Good-will toward men!* In order to this, may the eyes of your understanding be more and more opened to see the need of a Redeemer, and to behold the suitableness, freeness, and fulness of the redemption wrought out by the Son of GOD! This wish glows in my soul so ardently, that it brings me down upon my knees, while I write. And in that posture I intreat you all, to consider and improve the day of your visitation; and to prepare in good earnest, to meet with joy your GOD and your unworthy pastor in another world! Weak as I was when I left you, I hear that many, who were then healthy and strong, have got the start of me; and that some have been hurried into eternity, without a moment's warning. May this awful event strike a deeper consideration into all our souls! May the sound of their bodies, dashed in pieces at the bottom of the pit, rouse us to a speedy conversion, that we may never through carelessness or delay, fall into the bottomless pit! Tottering as I stand on the brink of the grave,

grave, some of you also may drop into it before me. Let us all then prepare for our approaching change, and never rest till we are assured it will be a happy one! Let the long-suffering of GOD toward us, who survive the hundreds that I have buried, lead us all to repentance! Embrace Jesus Christ, who wept for you in the manger, agonized for you in the garden, bled for you on the cross, and now pleads for you on his mediatorial throne! Meet me not at the great day in your sins and in your blood! Meet me in the robe of Christ's merits and in *the white linen* (the purity of heart and life) *which is the righteousness of the saints!* Let all wickedness be gone for ever with the old year! And with the new year begin a new life: a life of renewed devotion to GOD, and increasing love to our neighbour!

“ Though I hope to see much more of the goodness of GOD in the land of the living than I do see, yet blessed be the divine mercy, I see enough to keep my mind at all times unruffled, and to make me calmly willing to resign my soul into the hands of my faithful Creator. I desire your public thanks for all the favours which he continually sheweth me. May our thankfulness crown the new year, as the Lord's patience and goodness have renewed our life. Permit me to beseech an interest in your prayers also. Ask that I may be willing to receive all that GOD is willing to bestow. Ask that I may meekly suffer and zealously do all the will of GOD in my present circumstances: and that living or dying I may say, To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If GOD calls me soon, I beg he may in his good providence, appoint a more faithful shepherd over you. You need not fear but he will. For these many months you have had no famine of the word. And what GOD hath done for months, he can do for years: yea, all the years of your life. Only pray. Ask and you shall have. Meet me at the throne of grace, and you shall meet me at the throne of glory.

Your affectionate, obliged,  
Unworthy minister,

J. F.”



5. To a friend, mean time, he wrote thus: "With respect to my soul, I calmly wait in unshaken resignation, for the full salvation of GOD: ready to trust him, to venture on his faithful love, and on the sure mercies of *David*, either at midnight, noon-day, or cock-crowing. For my time is in his hand; and his time is best, and shall be my time. Death hath lost his sting; and I thank GOD, I know not what hurry of spirits is, or unbelieving fears, under the most trying circumstances. Thanks be to GOD for his unspeakable gift!"

6. He now spent part of his time at *Bristol*, but the greatest part at *Brislington*. In one place or the other, as well as at *Newington*, he was visited by many respectable persons. Many of these were Calvinists; several of whom bore witness to his deep piety and exalted spirit. But a dissenting minister, after pressing him hard, with regard to some of his opinions, told him with great warmth, "Mr. *Fletcher*, you had better have been gasping for life with an asthma, or have had all your limbs unstrung by a palsy, than to have wrote those Checks." Mr. *Fletcher* replied, "Sir, I then wanted more love, and I do so still:" and in his highest fervours of divine love, he always acknowledged his want of more.

7. Here also he missed no opportunity of instructing servants and children, suiting his discourse, in a manner peculiar to himself, to their capacity or their business. And what would have appeared low in another, did not appear so, when spoken by him. Thus he advised the cook, "to stir up the fire of divine love in his heart, that it might burn up all the rubbish therein, and raise a flame of holy affection: to which with the greatest cordiality he would subjoin a short prayer. Thus to the housemaid, he said, "I intreat you, to sweep every corner of your heart, that it may be fit to receive your heavenly guest." To a poor man, who came there in a deep consumption, but little concerned for his soul, he said, in a very solemn manner (laying one hand on his own breast, and the other on the poor man's) "GOD hath fixed a loud knocker at your breast and mine. Because we did not regard, as we ought

to have done, the gentle knocks and calls of his Holy Spirit, his word, and his providences, he has taken fast hold here, and we cannot get out of his hand. O let this knocker awaken you, who are just dropping into eternal sleep!"

8. When one or another occasionally mentioned any unkind thing, which had been said of him or his writings, if the person who had said it, was named, he would stop the speaker immediately, and offer up the most fervent prayer for the person of whom he spoke. He did not willingly suffer any one to say any thing against his opponents. And he made all the allowances for them, which, on a change of circumstances, he would have wished them to make for him.

9. He continued at *Bristlington* till the first of *December*, 1777. All other means having now been fairly tried, with very little effect, most of the symptoms being nearly the same as they were several months ago: it was determined by the most skilful physicians, that nothing could save his life but a sea voyage. When this was fixed, *Mr. Ireland* (a friend in need!) carried him back to *Newington*. While he was here, preparing for his voyage, he wrote as follows to one of his flock at *Madely*.

"I heartily thank you for your kind letter. May the GOD of all grace and love, our common Father and our all, bless you all with all spiritual blessings, and with such temporal favours, as will best serve the end of your growing in grace.

"My desire is, if I should be spared to minister to you again, to do it with more humility, diligence, love, and zeal. But as matters are, you must take the will for the deed. And let us all praise GOD for all that is past, and trust him for all that's to come! The Lord enable you all to cleave to Christ, and in him to abide in one mind, *striving together for the hope of the gospel*, the fulness of the Spirit. Of this we have often discoursed together: but we have not pressed into it with sufficient ardour and violence. GOD give us the humble and violent faith which inherits the promises, that we may always triumph in Christ,



Christ, in life and in death! I beg you would help me to thank the Author of all good for every blessing of this life: but above all, for the lively hope of the next, and for Christ our common hope, peace, joy, wisdom, righteousness and salvation! In him I meet and embrace you all! GOD bless you, and crown you with loving kindness and tender mercies! I live, if you stand. Do not let me want the reviving cordial of hearing that you stand together firm in the faith, deep in humility, and rejoicing in loving hope of the glory to come! Bless GOD much for the gift of his only-begotten Son! Be much in private prayer. Do not forget the assembling yourselves together in little companies, as well as in public. Walk humbly as in the sight of death and eternity. And pray still for

Your unworthy servant,

J. F.

“ Let none of your little companies want. If any do, you are welcome to my house. Take any part of the furniture there, and make use of it for their relief. And this shall be your full title for so doing.

Witness my hand,

JOHN FLETCHER.”

10. In the beginning of December, he set out with Mr. Ireland and his family, beside some other company. A little account of the former part of his journey, is given by Mr. Ireland, in a letter to a friend.

“ We left Calais, Dec. 12. The north wind was very high, and penetrated us even in the chaise. We put up at Bretzul, and the next day got to Abbeville; whence we were forced by the miserable accommodations we met with, to set out, though it was Sunday. Mr. Fletcher and I used to lead the way: but now the other chaises got before us. Nine miles from Abbeville our axletree gave way through the hard frost, and we were both left to the piercing cold, on the side of a hill, without any shelter. After waiting an hour and a half we sent the axletree and wheels back to be repaired: and leaving the body of the chaise under a guard,

guard, procured another to carry us to the next town. On the 15th, our chaise arrived in good repair. Travelling steadily forward (though the country was all covered with snow) on the 27th we reached *Dijon*. During the whole journey, Mr. *Fletcher* shewed visible marks of a recovery. He bore both the fatigue and piercing cold as well as the best of us. On the 31st we put up at *Lyons*, and solemnly closed the year, bowing our knees before the throne, which indeed we did not fail to do, all together, every day. January 4, 1778, we left *Lyons*, and came on the 9th to *Aix*. Here we rest: the weather being exceeding fine and warm. Mr. *Fletcher* walks out daily. He is now able to read, and to pray with us every morning and evening. He has no remains of his cough, or of the weakness in his breast. His natural colour is restored, and the fallowness quite gone. His appetite is good, and he takes a little wine."

11. In another letter, Mr. *Ireland* writes thus: "Soon after our arrival here, I rode out most days with my dear and valuable friend. He now and then complained of the uneasiness of the horse, and there were some remains of foreboding in his breast. But this soon went off. The beginning of February was warm, which, when he walked in the fields, relaxed him too much. But when the wind got north or east, he was braced again. His appetite is good; his complexion as healthy as it was eleven years ago. As his strength increases, he increases the length of his rides. Last Tuesday he set out on a journey of a hundred and twelve miles. The first day he travelled forty miles. The third day he travelled fifty-five. He bore his journey as well as I did: and was as well and as active at the end of it as at the beginning. During the day, he cried out, "Help me to praise the Lord for his goodness: I never expected to see this day." He now accepted a pressing invitation to preach to the Protestants here. He did so on Sunday morning on these words, *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith*. For some days before, he was afraid he had done wrong in accepting the invitation. But Oh! how shall I be able to express the power and liberty



which the Lord gave him! Both the French and English were greatly affected: the word went to the heart both of saints and sinners. If the Lord continues his strength and voice (which is now as good as ever it was) he has an earnest invitation to preach where we are going, near *Montpelier*. You would be astonished at the intreaties of pastors as well as people. He has received a letter from a minister in the *Levine* mountains, who intends to come to *Montpelier*, sixty miles, to press him to go and preach to his flock. Soon after this, his brother came to fetch him to *Switzerland*. He purposes to spend the next summer in his own country, and the following winter in these parts, or in some part of the south of *France*.

12. "His brother conducted him from *Montpelier* to *Nyon*, the place of his nativity. Here he lived in that which was his father's house, in the midst of his affectionate relations, who took care that he should neither want the best advice, perhaps equal to any in *Europe*, nor any thing that could possibly contribute to the full recovery of his health."

13. About this time a letter was written to that venerable old man, Mr. *Perronet*, vicar of *Shoreham*, informing him that there was a valuable estate at his native place, which properly belonged to him, and which might easily be recovered, if he sent one of his sons to claim it. All his friends whom he consulted on the occasion, judged this information was not to be slighted. And his youngest son, Mr. *William Perronet*, was willing to undertake the journey. But before he set out, he wrote to Mr. *Fletcher*, desiring his advice. Part of his answer was as follows:

*Nyon, June 2, 1778.*

"While I write to you to make your title clear to a precarious estate on earth; permit me to remind you of the heavenly inheritance entailed upon believers. The will (the New Testament) by which we can recover it, is proved: the court is equitable: the Judge loving and gracious. To enter on the possession of part of the estate here, and of the whole hereafter, we need only to *believe*,  
and

and *prove evangelically*, that we are believers. Let us set about it *now* with earnestness, with perseverance, and with full assurance, that through grace we shall carry our point. Alas, what are estates or crowns to grace and glory? The Lord grant we may all choose the better part!

“ Since I wrote last, in order to shorten my journey, I ventured to cross the mountains, which separate *France* from this country. But on the third day, I found an unexpected trial—a hill, which we were to ascend by a winding road, but so steep, that the horses were hardly able to draw the empty chaise. This obliged me to walk in the steepest places for several hours together. The sun was hot. I perspired violently, and the next day I spat blood again. But having kept to asses’ milk ever since, I am (blessed be GOD) much better.

“ This country is delightful. I invite you to come and see it, and share a delightful apartment. I design to try this fine air some months longer. We have a fine shady wood, near the lake, where I can ride in the cool all the day, and enjoy the singing of a multitude of birds. But this, though sweet, does not come up to the singing of my dear friends in *England*. There I meet them in spirit several hours in the day. GOD bless my dear friends!”

14. About the same time he wrote to Dr. *Turner* as follows:

“ Should I gather strength, I should under GOD, acknowledge you, dear Sir, as the instrument of that blessing, as you were above twenty years ago. Ten thousand thanks I render to you, Sir, and to Mr. *Perronet* for your kind and generous care and attendance. May GOD reward you both, by bestowing upon you all the blessings which can make life happy, death comfortable, and eternity delightful and glorious! May the richest cordials of divine love, and the balm of Gilead, a Saviour’s precious blood, revive your souls and comfort your hearts! And in your every want and extremity, may you both find such tender helpers and comforters, as have been found in you by, dear Sir,

Your most obliged, though most unworthy  
servant and patient,

JOHN FLETCHER.”



15. In the latter end of the year, Mr. *William Perronet* set out for *Switzerland*. In a letter he wrote from thence to Mr. *Greenwood*, he gives a little farther account of Mr. *Fletcher*. And this letter I the rather insert, as I believe this letter with a few more, is all that remains of that amiable young man, who never more saw his native land, being called hence, while he was on his journey to *England*.

There is something in the beginning of his letter, which is a little humourous: but this the candid reader will easily excuse. It runs thus;

*Nyon, Jan. 18, 1779.*

“ Dear Sir,

“ As you desire of me to send you some account of my journey, now I am a little settled, I will do it in the best manner I am able.

“ I set out from *London* on Tuesday, November 17. We arrived at *Dover* about 3 on Wednesday morning; embarked on Thursday, and arrived at *Calais* in about three hours.

“ Though it was in war-time, yet we did not meet with the least incivility, either here or in any part of *France*. But the badness of the inns makes the travelling through this country disagreeable. The rooms in general are so dirty, as to be fitter for swine than men. Each room both above and below stairs, is provided with two, three, or four beds. And they are so high as to require steps to get up to them. For there is on each bed, first, a monstrous canvas bag, stuffed with a huge quantity of straw: over this a feather bed, and on this as many mattresses as the host can furnish. But the worst is, the sheets are not damp, but rather downright wet. Yet the good woman would constantly scold us, if we attempted to dry them even at our own fire: insisting upon it, that it was impossible they should be damp at all.

[Continued at page 287.]

*The*

*The* JOURNAL of FRANCIS ASBURY, *Bishop of the*  
*Methodist-Episcopal Church.*

From March 26, 1772, to April 14, 1773.

[Continued from page 199.]

**M**ONDAY, September 7. *Richard Saufe, Charles White*, and myself set off for *New-Rochelle*. At night I felt myself unwell, and my mind under a cloud, but gave an exhortation at Mr. *Devoe's* in the evening.

Tuesday 8. This was a day of heaviness, much trouble, fore temptation, and sorrow of heart; but in the evening I was happy in GOD, and spake with power and feeling. On Wednesday my mind was more warmly engaged, and I preached to many people both at 3 o'clock and 7.

Thursday 10. Mr. *Devoe* accompanied me as far as *Kingsbridge*, on my way to *York*, where *Sammy Selby* met me, and rode with me the rest of the way.

I preached in the evening, and rose to preach next morning at 5. It appears to me that trouble is at hand, but I fear nothing; being conscious of having acted uprightly before them all, and having no by-ends in view. Whoever has must answer for it. Whatever comes, I am determined, while here, by the grace of GOD, to proceed according to the Methodist doctrine and discipline.

Friday 11. I met the people in the morning, to discourse with them about their temporal matters, and appointed Mr. *Chase* to take an account of the weekly and quarterly collections. But the two other stewards refused an exact entry of the money that is not settled. However, the people *must* have the same satisfaction concerning the other collections. Saturday morning, I felt a strong desire to live to GOD, and act with a single eye to his glory in all that I do. On Saturday evening we had a comfortable meeting. After preaching to many people on the Lord's day at 7, I prepared to approach the table. There was a great drawing among the people while these words were enforced, *This do in remembrance of me*. Lord prepare my heart.



heart. My bleeding Lord! let my soul feel thy melting love. Lord, make all thy people glad together in thee, that thou mayest be glorified in and by us both now and ever. At the table I had peace and joy; and was deeply affected at the sight of the poor negroes, seeing their sallow faces adorn the table of the Lord. In the evening I had a full house and much divine assistance.

Monday 14. I had much peace and love in preaching at 5, and this day felt power to live to GOD.

Tuesday 15. I spent great part of my time in company, and preached with some life to a small company at *Bloomingtondale*. Preaching at 5 the next morning, I had many people, and a comfortable sense of GOD; and possess a humble hope that I shall live this day to GOD.

Wednesday 16. I set off for *New-town*, and find nearness to GOD and more constancy of mind, with a humble hope that I shall live to GOD. Our journey was wet and troublesome; however there was a small company of people, and I preached with some life, and disregard my fatigue if any good can be done. We returned to *York* in the night, which was very dark: but he to whom the darkness is known, conducted us in safety. Friday morning I found peace and life; but Satan was hard at my heels, Lord help me to be always guarded, and to fly the very appearance of evil; so that in thy strength I may every moment conquer.

Saturday 19. I felt comfortable in preaching this morning at 5 o'clock. Oh my GOD! help me to live this day to thy glory. We had life this evening also in public exhortation.

Lord's day 20. In the morning we had a good time while I spake from the latter part of the eighty-first psalm; and in the evening we had a very full house, and the Lord favoured me with warmth and power while I addressed the people from Rom. vi. 17, 18. After preaching on Monday morning, I went to *Staten-Island*. Justice *Wright* met me and informed me that the people were very busy at that time in court; so I went and preached to many attentive people at *Bird's ferry*. Hitherto the Lord hath

hath helped. I will endeavour to praise him with my whole heart, and glorify him more and more. Tuesday I crossed the bay and preached in the evening at *York*.

Wednesday 23. In the morning I preached, and felt a measure of peace, and stronger confidence in my soul towards GOD.

I am now twenty-seven years of age, and have had a religious concern on my heart about fourteen years; though I felt something of GOD as early as the age of seven years.

Thursday 24. I preached in the morning from Psalm lxxxvi. 17; and found myself enlarged in the evening on the subject of the good Samaritan. This day my soul has felt much love toward GOD, and my mind has been bent on doing his will.

Friday 25. Attending the lecture to-day, I heard the Doctor with much satisfaction; and in the evening preaching, I laid open the plague of the human heart as I felt it. It was a solemn time. This day we received tidings from *Philadelphia* of their doing well both in spiritual and temporal matters. Some have been much dissatisfied with private society-meetings, and collections in the classes. But in the midst of every trial, the Lord keeps me in peace. On Saturday morning, though it was cold, we had many people and a moving time at 5 o'clock; and a comfortable season in the evening exhortation.

Lord's day 27. Preaching this morning on *building the tower*, I had some assistance; but experienced some heavy exercises of mind this day. In the evening I was enabled to preach with power, on the awful subject of judgment: attempting

I. To prove that the judgment will be universal.

II. To describe the person of the Judge.

III. To describe the awful events preceding and attending that period.

IV. To point out the business of the day.

V. To shew the decision and consequents.

Monday 28. Many people attended the preaching at 5 o'clock, and Brother *Sause* and myself set off in the forenoon



noon for *New-Rochelle*. As we came unexpectedly on the people, I improved the occasion by preaching from these words, *In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.*

Tuesday 29. At friend *Devoe's*, I preached with inward life from *Ezek. xxxiii. 4.* I have been much assaulted this day with temptations. But have been kept by the power of GOD. I find a degree of effeminacy cleaving to me, but abhor it from my very heart. The reading of Mr. *Wesley's* journal has been made a blessing to me, and I hope for victory over all my foes.

Wednesday 30. I was led to speak very closely at *Peter Bonnett's*, to a congregation in which were many old people; and then returned to Mr. *Devoe's*, where I preached with freedom, and enforced the duty of meeting together among themselves.

October 1. I set off for *York*; preaching to a small company at *Kingsbridge* on my way. This day I received a letter from my mother, informing me that she was very weak in body, and had an earnest desire to see me once more before she dies.

October 3. Though I preached with liberty last night, yet my mind was troubled to-day with temptations; but earnestly desire to renew my covenant with GOD. Mr. *Wright* received a letter from Mr. *Wesley*, enforcing our rules and discipline. My desire is to set loose to every created object, and through grace to be holy as my Lord is holy.

Lord's day 4. I felt divine assistance in preaching both morning and evening; but was grieved at society-meeting, to see the steward desirous to let strangers in.

On Monday I wrote to Mr. *Wesley*, and communicated the true sentiments of my mind.

Tuesday 6. This was a day of peace and rest to my soul. After preaching at night with some power, I spoke to our steward, whose conduct did not altogether please me—frequently avoiding to speak to me—absenting himself from the meeting of the leaders—the appearance of dissimulation—opposing our rules—and consulting persons who  
were

members of our society. He appeared to be somewhat affected by the conversation.

Thursday 8. In preaching both morning and evening, I had an opening of soul toward the people, and found my mind in peace. My greatest concern is to be altogether holy in heart. I met the society this evening, and told them plainly my mind relative to their state as a collective body.

Friday 9. I met the leaders, and there were some sharp debates. After much had been said, I was charged with using Mr. N—— ill, in saying, He opposed my meeting the society. Mr. L—— told me that I had already preached the people away; and intimated that the whole work would be destroyed by me. Perhaps this was because I spoke so freely to Mr. N——, and desired him to take care what company he kept.

Saturday 10. I received a letter from Mr. *Wesley*, in which he required a strict attention to discipline; and appointed me to act as assistant. He also enjoined that Mr. *Williams* might not print any more books without his consent. I also received a letter from Mr. *Williams*, informing me of the state of matters in *Maryland*; and that it was appointed for me to winter there. For this I intend to prepare.

Lord's day 11. Preached with power in the morning, and spake freely to a large congregation in the evening. My soul is blest with peace and love to GOD.

Monday 12. Read one of Mr. *Wesley's* sermons to the people, and believe some felt it reproving them for evil speaking. My mind is serene and comfortable. Part of Monday was spent in meeting classes; and on Tuesday morning at 5, I had many people and preached with life. My intention is to deal faithfully with all; and it is my real opinion, that I am not so sensible of faults in any other persons, as in myself. Lord, help me to be faithful, and in all I do to glorify thee more than ever. My soul felt power this evening in preaching.

Wednesday. Went to *New-town*, but was not expected. However, we collected many people to hear the word.



I then returned to *York*, and after preaching in the morning was engaged in settling the classes, making up some bands, and meeting the children. I have reason to be thankful, though my trials have been great from many quarters, they have not moved me.

Friday 16. Preached in the morning, and felt resigned to any thing, having no choice, but am willing to go to the end of the world, if I can be holy and useful.

Lord's day 18. Preached in the morning with some sensibility, and then went to hear Mr. *Ingles*, who delivered a profitable discourse on the education of children. He proved the necessity, antiquity, and human authority of catechising; and made it evident, that in the primitive church, the best and ablest men were appointed for this work. He gave some account of the school in *Alexandria*; and told the audience, that in this duty there should be both precept and example, and sometimes severity. In the evening I was enabled to speak plainly to a large congregation, from *Deut. xxx. 19. I call heaven and earth to record against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.* This day we had a love-feast. Many people spoke freely, but not long. This I have observed more here than in *England*, that the people speak short, and yet very full.

Monday 19. Set off in the stage for *Philadelphia*. The company was all pretty quiet except one young man, who frequently profaned the name of the Lord. It was my intention to reprove him, but waiting for a proper time, I found an opportunity when there was only one person with him, and then told him how he had grieved me. He received the admonition very well; and excused himself by saying, he did not think of what he was doing. Afterwards he seemed more careful. After dining at *Brunswick*, we came to *Princeton*, a place I had long wished to see for the sake of the pious Mr. *Davis*, late president of the college there. Here I met Mr. *Boardman*, and we both agreed in judgment about the affairs of the society: and we were comforted together. The next day I came to  
*Trenton*;

*Trenton*; but a drunken sailor had locked up the court-house, so was obliged to preach in a school-house, where we had a comfortable meeting; and also at 5 the next morning.

[Continued at page 297.]

## LETTER.

[Motives and marks of growth.]

*To the most loving and best beloved, the servants of Christ in Taunton, grace and peace.*

*Most dear and tender friends,*

**W**HOSE I am, and whom under GOD I desire to serve; to build you up in holiness and comfort hath been through grace my great ambition. This is that which I laboured for; this is that which I suffer for: and in short, the end of all my applications to you, and to GOD for you. How do your souls prosper? Are they in a thriving case? What progress do you make in sanctification? Doth the house of *Saul* grow weaker and weaker, and the house of *David* stronger and stronger? Beloved, I am jealous of you with a godly jealousy, lest any of you should lose ground in these declining times: and therefore cannot but be often calling upon you to look to your standing, and to watch and hold fast, that no man take your crown. Ah! how surely shall you reap in the end, if you faint not! Take heed therefore that you lose not the things you have wrought, but as you have begun well, so go on in the strength of Christ, and give diligence to the full assurance of hope to the end.

Do you need motives? 1. *How much are you behind hand?* Oh, the fair advantages that we have lost! What time, what sabbaths, sermons, sacraments, are upon the matter lost! How much work have we yet to do! Are you



you sure of heaven yet? Are you fit to die yet? Surely they that are under so many great wants, had need to set upon some more thriving courses.

Secondly, *Consider what others have gained, whilst we, it may be, sit down by the loss*: Have we not met many vessels richly laden, while our souls are empty? Oh, the golden prizes that some have won! While we have folded the hands to sleep, have not many of our own standing in religion, left us far behind them?

Thirdly, *Consider you will all find little enough when you come to die*: The wise among the virgins have no oil to spare at the coming of the bridegroom; temptation and death will put all your graces to it. How much ado have many had at last to put into this harbour! *David* cries for respite till he had recovered a little more strength.

Fourthly, *Consider how short your time for gathering in probably is*? The Israelites gathered twice so much manna against the sabbath as they did at other times, because at that time there was no manna fell. Brethren, you know not how long you have to lay in for. Do you ask for marks, how you may know your souls to be in a thriving case?

*First, If your appetites be more strong*. Do you thirst after GOD and grace, more than heretofore? Do your cares for and desires after the world abate? And do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Whereas you were wont to come with an ill-will to holy duties, do you now come to them as an hungry stomach to its meat?

*Secondly, If your pulses beat more even*. Are you still off and on, hot and cold? Or is there a more even spun thread of holiness through your whole course? Do you make good the ground from which you were formerly beaten off?

*Thirdly, If you do look more to the carrying on together the duties of both tables*. Do you not only look to the keeping of your own vineyards, but do you lay out yourselves for the good of others? and are ye filled with zealous desires for their conversion and salvation? Do you manage your talk and your trade, by the rules of religion?

Do

Do you eat and sleep by rule? Doth religion form and mould, and direct your carriage towards husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants? Do you grow more universally conscientious? Is piety more diffusive than ever with you? Doth it come more abroad with you, out of your closets, into your houses, your shops, your fields? Doth it journey with you, and buy and sell for you? Hath it the calling voice in all you do?

*Fourthly, If the duties of religion be more delightful to you.* Do you take more delight in the word than ever? Are you more in love with secret prayer, and more abundant in it? Cannot you be content with your ordinary seasons, but are ever and anon making extraordinary visits to heaven? And upon all occasions turning aside to talk with GOD in some short ejaculations? Are you often darting up your soul heavenwards? Is it meat and drink for you to do the will of GOD? Do you come off more freely with GOD, and answer his calls with more readiness of mind?

*Fifthly, If you are more abundant in those duties which are most displeasing to the flesh.* Are you more earnest in mortification? Are you more strict and severe than ever in the duty of daily self-examination, and holy meditation? Do you hold the reins harder upon the flesh than ever? Do you keep a stricter watch upon your appetites? Do you set a stronger guard upon your tongues? Have you a more jealous eye upon your hearts?

*Sixthly, If you grow more vile in your own eyes.* Do you grow more out of love with men's esteem, and set less by it? Are you not marvellous tender of being slighted? Can you rejoice to see others preferred before you? Can you heartily value and love them that think meanly of you?

*Seventhly, If you grow more quick of sense, more sensible of divine influences, or withdrawings.* Are you more afraid of sin than ever? Are your sins a greater pain to you than heretofore? Are your very infirmities your great afflictions? and the daily workings of corruption a continual grief of mind to you?

I must



I must conclude abruptly, commending you to GOD,  
and can only tell you that I am

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

J. A.

## LETTER.

[From Miss M. A—, to the Rev. J. Wesley.]

Rev. Sir,

AS the end of your labour in the vineyard is the conversion of souls, it will give you much pleasure to be informed that my sister *Nancy* is truly converted.

She says, she often envied the happiness of the people called Methodists; and that not finding it in herself, concluded it was for want of knowing GOD.

Mr. *Eden's* conversation was much blessed to her, as many things he said greatly affected her. But under your sermon on, “*Now* is the accepted time, and *now* is the day of salvation,” her heart said, this belongs to *me*. When you said to me at supper, “*Press forward, lest your sister should get before you,*” the word came home to her heart. When she retired, she prayed earnestly that it might be so.

In the morning, a little after you took leave of her, she could praise GOD, as *her* GOD: soon after, she communicated it to her brother; and the next day joined the society. The day following, coming over to see me, I was quite astonished; as she seemed fully to possess the faith which worketh by love. She now prayed, and sang the praises of GOD continually; and was so full of the love of GOD, that she could hardly contain herself. She seemed also to forget her food, while her sleep quite forsook her. She most earnestly desired to receive the Lord's supper, and had no fear of death; but feared it was wrong to be so happy, as she had felt so little sorrow for sin.

The two things she formerly thought would be her greatest cross to part with, if ever she became serious, she was

- tried

tried with the next day; when behold! the mountain became a plain: for her right hand was cut off without much difficulty!

She said she would go to her worldly acquaintance, and tell them what GOD had done for her soul: and also tell them how she must live and act; and that if they would do so too, she would continue their acquaintance; but if not, she must break it off.

I know, Sir, you will bless GOD with me, because he has given you a child, and me a sister in the Lord. I now begin to hope that all our family will be brought to the knowledge of the truth. How delightful is the thought! I bless GOD that I can rejoice in Christ Jesus! and have no confidence in the flesh. Pray for me, reverend Sir, and believe me to be your most affectionate and obliged servant,

M. A——.

Feb. 20, 1773.

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*A Short Account of the Death of Mrs. S. BUMSTED.*

**H**EARING that my dear wife was in labour, I flew immediately to her assistance, and found her almost in the agonies of death; but perfectly sensible and very happy.

When we judged her not able to pronounce one word distinctly, she broke out, to my great surprise and comfort,

“ I’ll praise my Maker while I’ve breath,  
And when my voice is lost in death,  
Praise shall employ my nobler powers.”

When she saw all about her in great affliction, she endeavoured to comfort us by repeating the following words,

“ Come on, my partners in distress,  
My comrades through the wilderness,

Who



Who still your bodies feel;  
 Awhile forget your griefs and fears,  
 And look beyond this vale of tears  
 To that celestial hill."

When death seemed to appear something formidable,  
 she cried,

"No, not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,  
 Shall fright me from the shore."

Again, she said,

"Hark! they whisper! angels say,  
 Sister spirit, come away!"

Then the dear creature extending her dying arms, as if  
 just going to fly away to her Saviour, said,

"For me my elder brethren stay,  
 And angels beckon me away,  
 And Jesus bids me come!"

She then added, with unspeakable rapture,

"O what are all my sufferings here,  
 If Lord thou count me meet,  
 With that enraptur'd host to appear,  
 And worship at thy feet!"

I never before saw a dying creature so supported: and  
 what I then felt, and do now feel on the occasion, is un-  
 utterable! My heart seems ready to burst with grief and  
 joy at the same instant! Surely no one ever stood in more  
 need of the prayers of christian friends than I do, who am  
 now deprived of the comfort and assistance of a most wor-  
 thy and engaging companion.

D. BUMSTED.

London, Oct. 4, 1773.

*A short*

*A short Account of MARY PARKINSON, of Lisburn, in  
Ireland.*

**M**ARY PARKINSON feared GOD from her childhood, and often lamented her sinful state; though she was ignorant of the nature and method of salvation! About eleven years ago, as one was giving out the following hymn, in her father's house,

O let no gloomy crime,  
Pollute the rising day!  
Or Jesu's blood, like evening dew,  
Wash all the stains away!

she felt her need of Christ, and the same night found a clear sense of her acceptance with GOD. That night, while asleep, she was in a kind of trance, and saw the glory of heaven. Being waked, she cried out to those about her, "O come, and taste the waters of life; for they are now running!" She also gave thanks for the comfortable sleep she had had, and seemed grieved that she awoke so soon.

From this time she was much in prayer for herself, the success of the gospel, and the world in general. In this employment she frequently spent whole nights: never taking rest till she found power to believe. Though for a long time she had been dreadfully afflicted with rheumatic pains, she was supported under them by faith and prayer.

About nine years ago (having now lost the use of her limbs) she was carried to a love-feast, at Mr. G—'s, at which time her soul was filled with the pure love of GOD. From that time she was never heard to complain that GOD dealt hardly by her; but rejoiced evermore, prayed without ceasing, and in every thing gave thanks.

Being asked a little before her death, if she found any temptation? she said, "I am sometimes tempted to think that GOD deals hardly with me; but these temptations all vanish by looking unto Jesus!"

For some years, her knees being drawn up to her breast, she was forced to lie constantly on one side, till her bones



came nearly through her skin. Accordingly, she was so contracted, that when dead, her whole length was not quite two feet. She had also (besides constant pain) been quite blind for some time; and experienced very great poverty. Yet in all this she was so supported, that she could praise the Lord continually.

Some time before her death, she said, "I see the gate of heaven open to receive me; and hear the Lord say, Come up, my love, my dove, my undefiled! He assures me I shall enter in: seeing my robes are washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb. I shall soon mount up as on the wings of an eagle, and be where pain and sickness, sorrow and weeping, shall be no more!" Having said this, she fell asleep in Jesus, in the 50th year of her age.

*April 5, 1785.*

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## Poetry.

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### SHORT HYMNS.

EXOD. xxxiv. 6. *Merciful and gracious.*

**M**ERCIFUL GOD, thyself proclaim  
 In this polluted breast;  
 Mercy is thy distinguish'd name,  
 Which suits a sinner best;  
 Our misery doth for pity call,  
 Our sin implores thy grace;  
 And thou art merciful to all  
 Our lost apostate race.

EXOD.

Exod. xxxiv. 6. *Abundant in goodness.*

**T**HY goodness and thy truth to me,  
 To every soul abound ;  
 A vast, unfathomable sea,  
 Where all our thoughts are drown'd :  
 Its streams the whole creation reach,  
 So plenteous is the store :  
 Enough for all, enough for each,  
 Enough for evermore,

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Do. xxxiv. 6. *Abundant in truth.*

**F**AITHFUL, O Lord, thy mercies are,  
 A rock that cannot move ;  
 A thousand promises declare  
 Thy constancy of love :  
 Throughout the universe it reigns  
 Unalterably sure ;  
 And while the truth of GOD remains,  
 Thy goodness must endure.

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Do. xxxiv. 7. *Keeping mercy for thousands.*

**R**ESERVES of unexhausted grace  
 Are treasur'd up in thee,  
 For myriads of the fallen race,  
 For all mankind and me :  
 The flowing stream continues full,  
 Till time its course hath run :  
 And while eternal ages roll,  
 Thy mercy shall flow on.



NUMB. xi. 27. *There ran a young man, and told Moses,  
and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp.*

**E**LDAD, they said, and Medad there,  
Irregularly bold,  
By Moses uncommission'd dare  
A separate meeting hold!  
And still whom none but heaven will own,  
Men whom the world decry,  
Men, authoriz'd by GOD alone,  
Presume to prophesy!

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Verse 28. *My lord Moses, forbid them.*

**H**OW often have I blindly done  
What zealous *Jeshua* did,  
Impatient to the rulers run,  
And cry'd, "My lords, forbid!  
" Silence the schismatics! constrain  
" Their *thoughts* with ours t' agree,  
" And sacrifice the souls of men  
" To idol-unity!"

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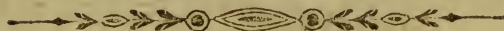
Verse 29. *Enviest thou for my sake?*

**M**OSES, the minister of GOD,  
Rebukes our partial love,  
Who envy at the gifts bestow'd  
On those we disapprove!  
We do not our own spirit know,  
Who wish to see suppress'd  
The men that *Jesu's* spirit show,  
The men whom GOD hath blest.

T H E

# Arminian Magazine,

For JUNE 1790.



## PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED.

[BY JOHN WESLEY, M. A.]

[Continued from page 216.]

XVII. **I** BELIEVE *Election* means, secondly, A divine appointment of some men to eternal happiness. But I believe this Election to be conditional, as well as the Reprobation opposite thereto. I believe the eternal decree concerning both, is expressed in those words, *He that believeth, shall be saved: he that believeth not, shall be damned:* and this decree without doubt GOD will not change, and man cannot resist. According to this, all true believers are in scripture termed *elect*: as all who continue in unbelief, are so long properly *reprobates*, that is, *unapproved* of GOD, and *without discernment* touching the things of the Spirit,

XVIII. Now GOD to whom all things are present at once, who sees all eternity at one view, *calleth the things that are not, as though they were;* the things that are not yet, as though they were now subsisting. Thus he calls *Abraham, the father of many nations*, before even *Isaac* was born. And thus Christ is called, *the Lamb slain from the foundation*



*foundation of the world*, though he was not slain, in fact, till some thousand years after. In like manner, GOD calleth true believers, *elect from the foundation of the world*: although they were not actually elect or believers, till many ages after, in their several generations. Then only it was, that they were actually elected, when they were made the *sons of GOD by faith*. Then were they in fact, *chosen and taken out of the world*; *elect* (saith St. Paul) *through belief of the truth*: or (as St. Peter expresses it) *elect according to the foreknowledge of GOD, through sanctification of the Spirit*.

XIX. This Election I as firmly believe, as I believe the scripture to be of GOD. But unconditional Election I cannot believe; not only because I cannot find it in scripture, but also (to wave all other considerations) because it necessarily implies unconditional Reprobation. Find out any Election, which does not imply Reprobation, and I will gladly agree to it. But Reprobation I can never agree to, while I believe the scripture to be of GOD: as being utterly irreconcilable to the whole scope and tenor both of the Old and New Testament.

O that GOD would give me the desire of my heart! that he would grant the thing which I long for! even that your mind might now be free and calm, and open to the light of his Spirit! that you would impartially consider, how it is possible to reconcile Reprobation with the following scriptures!

Gen. iii. 17. 19. "Because thou hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it—In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," &c.—The curse shall come on thee and thine offspring, not because of any absolute decree of mine, but because of thy sin.

Chap. iv. 7. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Sin only, not the decree of Reprobation, hinders thy being accepted.

Deut. vii. 9, 10. "Know that the Lord thy GOD, he is the faithful GOD, which keepeth covenant and mercy with

with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations: and repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them."

Verse 12. "Wherefore if ye hearken to these judgments and keep and do them, the Lord thy GOD shall keep unto thee the covenant which he swore unto thy fathers."

Chap. xi. 26, 27, 28. "Behold I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: a blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your GOD; and a curse, if you will not obey."

Chap. xxx. 15, &c. "See, I have set before thee this day, life and good, and death and evil: in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy GOD, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments—and the Lord thy GOD shall bless thee. But if thou wilt not hear, I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish. I call heaven and earth to record this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

2 Chron. xv. 1, 2. "And the Spirit of GOD came upon Azariah, and he said,—The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you."

Ezra ix. 13, 14. "After all that is come upon us, for our evil deeds, and for our great trespasses; should we again break thy commandments, wouldst thou not be angry with us, till thou hadst consumed us?"

Job xxxvi. 5. "Behold, GOD is mighty, and despiseth not any." Could he then reprobate any?

Psaln cxlv. 9. "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

Prov. i. 23, &c. "Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you."

"Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded:—I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." Why?

Because



Because of my decree? No. “For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord.”

Isa. lxxv. 2, &c. “I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people;—a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face:—therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.—Ye shall all bow down to the slaughter, because when I called, ye did not answer.—Therefore ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name.”

Ezek. xviii. 20, &c. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear (*eternally*) the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son.—Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord; and not that he should return from his ways and live?”

Matt. vii. 26. “Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand.” Nay, he could not help it, if he was ordained thereto.

Chap. xi. 20, &c. “Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. Wo unto thee, Chorazin; wo unto thee, Bethsaida: for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in *Tyre* and *Sidon*, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (What? if they were not *elect*? And if they of *Bethsaida* had been *elect*, would they not have repented too?) “But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* in the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, *Capernaum*, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in *Sodom*, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of *Sodom* in the day of judgment, than for thee.”

Chap. xii. 41. “The men of *Nineveh* shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of *Jonas*; and behold, a greater

greater than *Jonás* is here." But what was this to the purpose, if *the men of Nineveh* were elected, and *this generation* of men were not?

Chap. xiii. 11, 12. "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath (*i. e. useth what he hath*) to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance. But whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."

Chap. xxii. 8. "They which were bidden were not worthy," were shut out from the marriage of the Lamb: Why so? Because "they would not come," ver. 3.

The whole twenty-fifth chapter requires, and will reward your most serious consideration. If you can reconcile unconditional Reprobation with this, you may reconcile it with the 18th of Ezekiel.

John iii. 19. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved (*or chose*) darkness rather than light."

Chap. v. 44. "How *can* ye believe, who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from GOD only?" Observe *the reason* why they *could* not believe: not in GOD, but in themselves.

Acts viii. 20, &c. "Thy money perish with thee (*and so doubtless it did*). Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of GOD. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray GOD, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." So that St. *Peter* had no thought of any absolute Reprobation, even in the case of *Simon Magus*.

Rom. i. 20, &c. "They are without excuse; because when they knew GOD, they glorified him not as GOD;—wherefore GOD also gave them up to uncleanness:—who changed the truth of GOD into a lie.—For this cause GOD gave them up to vile affections.—As they did not like to retain GOD in their knowledge, GOD gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."



2 Theff. ii. 10, &c. "Them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause GOD shall send them strong delusion, to believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

XX. How will you reconcile Reprobation with the following scriptures, which declare GOD's willingness that all should be saved?

Matt. xxii. 9. "As many as ye shall find, bid (*invite*) to the marriage."

Mark xvi. 15. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Luke xix. 41, &c. "And when he came near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If (*rather O that*) thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!"

John v. 34. "These things I say, that ye may be saved," viz. those who persecuted him, and "*sought to slay him*," ver. 16. and of whom he complains, ver. 40. "Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life."

Acts xvii. 24, &c. "GOD that made the world and all things therein—giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth—That they should seek the Lord."—Observe, this was GOD's end in creating all nations on all the earth.

Rom. v. 18. "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

Chap. x. xii. "The same Lord over all, is rich (*in mercy*) unto all that call upon him."

1 Tim. ii. 3, 4. "This is good and acceptable in the sight of GOD our Saviour, *who willeth all men to be saved*:"—Chap. iv. 10. "Who is the favour of all men, especially of those that believe," i. e. intentionally of all, and actually of believers.

James

James i. 5. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of GOD, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."

2 Pet. iii. 9. "The Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

1 John iv. 14. "We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."

XXI. How will you reconcile Reprobation with the following scriptures, which declare that Christ came to save all men, that he died for all, that he atoned for all, even for those that finally perish?"

Matt. xviii. 11. "The Son of man is come to save that which was lost," without any restriction.

John i. 29. "Behold the Lamb of GOD, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Chap. iii. 17. "GOD sent his Son into the world, that the world through him might be saved."

"Chap. xii. 47. "I came not (*now*) to judge the world, but to save the world."

Rom. xiv. 15. "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died."

1 Cor. viii. 11. "Through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?"

2 Cor. v. 14, &c. "We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they (*or* all) who live, should live unto him which died for them." Here you see, not only that Christ died for all men, but likewise the end of his dying for them.

1 Tim. ii. 6. "Christ Jesus, which gave himself a ransom for all."

Heb. ii. 9. "We see Jesus made lower than the angels, that he might taste death for every man."

2 Pet. ii. 1. "There shall be false teachers among you, who shall privately bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction." You see, he bought, or redeemed



ed even those that perish, that bring upon themselves swift destruction.

1 John ii. 1, 2. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins" (*who are elect according to the knowledge of GOD*) "and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

You are sensible, these are but a very small part of the scriptures which might be brought on each of these heads. But they are enough: and they require no comment; taken in their plain, easy, obvious sense, they abundantly prove, that there is not, cannot be, any such thing as unconditional Reprobation.

[Continued at page 313.]

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## S E R M O N XVIII.

On ECCLESIASTES vii. 10.

Say not thou, *What is the cause, that the former days were better than these? For thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.*

I. **I**T is not easy to discern any connection between this text and the context; between these words, and either those that go before, or those that follow after. It seems to be a detached, independent sentence, like very many in the *Proverbs of Solomon*. And like them, it contains a weighty truth, which deserves a serious consideration. Is not the purport of the question this? It is not wise, to enquire into the cause of a supposition, unless the supposition itself be not only true, but clearly proved so to be. Therefore it is not wise to enquire into the cause of this supposition, *That the former days were better than these*: because, common as it is, it was never yet proved, nor indeed ever can be.

2. Perhaps

2. Perhaps there are few suppositions which have passed more currently in the world than this, That the former days were better than these; and that in several respects. It is generally supposed, that we now live in the dregs of time, when the world is as it were grown old, and consequently, that every thing therein is in a declining state. It is supposed, in particular, that men were some ages ago, of a far taller stature than now; that they likewise had far greater abilities, and enjoyed a deeper and stronger understanding: in consequence of which their writings of every kind are far preferable to those of later times. Above all, it is supposed, that the former generations of men excelled the present in virtue: that mankind in every age, and in every nation, have degenerated more and more: so that at length they have fallen from the golden, into the iron age, and now justice is fled from the earth.

3. Before we consider the truth of these suppositions, let us enquire into the rise of them. And as to the general supposition, That the world was once in a far more excellent state than it is, may we not easily believe, that this arose (as did all the fabulous accounts of the golden age) from some confused traditions concerning our first parents and their paradisiacal state? To this refer many of the fragments of ancient writings, which men of learning have gleaned up. Therefore we may allow, that there is some truth in the supposition: seeing it is certain, the days which *Adam* and *Eve* spent in Paradise, were far better than any which have been spent by their descendants, or ever will be, till Christ returns to reign upon earth.

4. But whence could that supposition arise, That men were formerly of a larger stature than they are now? This has been a generally prevailing opinion, almost in all nations and in all ages. Hence near two thousand years ago, the well-known line of *Virgil*,

*Qualia nunc hominum producit corpora tellus.*

Hence near two thousand years before him, *Homer* tells us of one of his heroes throwing a stone, which hardly ten men



men could lift, 'Οἱοι νυν βεγοι' *Such as men are now.* We allow indeed, there have been giants in all ages, in various parts of the world. Whether the antediluvians mentioned in *Genesis* were such or no (which many have questioned) we cannot doubt but *Og* the king of *Basan* was such, as well as *Goliath* of *Gath*. Such also were many of the children (or descendants) of *Anak*. But it does not appear, that in any age or nation men in general were larger than they are now. We are very sure they were not for many centuries past, by the tombs and coffins that have been discovered, which are exactly of the same size, with those that are now in use. And in the catacombs at *Rome*, the niches for the dead bodies which were hewn in the rock sixteen hundred years ago, are none of them above six feet in length, and some a little under. Above all, the pyramids of *Egypt* (that of king *Cheops* in particular) have beyond all reasonable doubt remained, at least three thousand years; yet none of the mummies (embalmed bodies) brought therefrom, are above five feet ten inches long.

5. But how then came this supposition to prevail so long and so generally in the world? I know not but it may be accounted for from hence. Great and little are relative terms, and all men judge of greatness and littleness, by comparing things with themselves. Therefore it is not strange, if we think men are smaller now, than they were when we were children. I remember a remarkable instance of this, in my own case. After having left it seven years, I had a great desire to see the school where I was brought up. When I was there, I wondered that the boys were so much smaller than they used to be when I was at school. "Many of my school-fellows ten years ago, were taller by the head than I. And few of them that are at school now, reach up to my shoulders." Very true; but what was the reason of this? Indeed a very plain one: it was not because they were smaller, but because I was bigger than I was seven years before. I verily believe this is the cause, why men in general suppose the human race do decrease in stature. They remember the time when most of those round about them, were both taller and bigger than

than themselves. Yea, and all men have done the same, in their successive generations. Is it any wonder then, that all should have run into the same mistake, when it has been transmitted unawares from father to son, and probably will be, to the end of time?

6. But there is likewise a general supposition, that the understanding of man, and all his mental abilities, were of a larger size in the ancient days than they are now: and the ancient inhabitants of the earth had far greater talents than the present. Men of eminent learning have been of this mind, and have contended for it with the utmost vehemence. It is granted, that many of the ancient writers, both philosophers, poets, and historians, will not easily be excelled, if equalled, by those of later ages. We may instance in *Homer* and *Virgil* as poets, *Thucydides* and *Livy* as historians. But, this mean time is to be remarked, concerning most of these writers, that each of them spent his whole life in composing and polishing one book. What wonder then if they were exquisitely finished, when so much labour was bestowed upon them? I doubt, whether any man in *Europe* or in the world, of the present age, has taken so much pains in finishing any treatise. Otherwise it might possibly have equalled, if not excelled, any that went before.

7. But that the generality of men were not one jot wiser in ancient times, than they are at the present time, we may easily gather from the most authentic records. One of the most ancient nations, concerning whom we have any certain account, is the *Egyptian*. And what conception can we have of their understanding and learning, when we reflect upon the objects of their worship? These were not only the vilest of animals, as dogs and cats; but the leeks and onions that grew in their own gardens. I knew a great man, who scurrilously abused all those who are so void of common sense as to believe any such thing concerning them. He peremptorily affirms (but without condescending to give us any proof) that the ancient inhabitants of *Egypt* had a deep hidden meaning in all this. Let him believe it who can. I cannot believe it on any  
man's



man's bare assertion. I believe they had no deeper hidden meaning in worshipping cats than our school-boys have in baiting them. And I apprehend the common *Egyptians* were just as wise three thousand years ago, as the common ploughmen in *England* and *Wales* are at this day. I suppose their natural understanding, like their stature, was on a level with ours; and their learning, their acquired knowledge, many degrees inferior to that of persons of the same rank, either in *France*, *Holland* or *Germany*.

8. "However, did not the people of former times greatly excel us in virtue?" This is the point of greatest importance: the rest are but trifles in comparison of it. Now is it not universally allowed, that every age grows worse and worse? Was it not observed by the old heathen poet, almost two thousand years ago,

*Ætas parentum, pejor avis tulit*  
*Nos nequiores, jam duros*  
*Progeniem vitiosorem.*

That is, in plain prose, "The age of our parents was more vicious than that of our grandfathers. Our age is more vicious than that of our fathers. We are worse than our fathers were, and our children will be worse than us."

9. It is certain, this has been the common cry, from generation to generation. And if it is not true, whence should it arise? How can we account for it? Perhaps another remark of the same poet may help us to an answer. May it not be extracted from the general character which he gives of old men?

*Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti*  
*Se puero, censor, castigatq. minorum.*

Is it not the common practice of the old men, to praise the past, and condemn the present time? And this may probably operate much farther than one would at first imagine; when those that have more experience than we, and  
therefore,

therefore, we are apt to think, more wisdom, are almost continually harping upon this, the degeneracy of the world! Those who are accustomed from their infancy to hear how much better the world was formerly than it is now—(and so it really seemed to them, when they were young, and just come into the world, and when the cheerfulness of youth gave a pleasing air to all that was round about them)—the idea of the world's being worse and worse would naturally grow up with them. And so it would be, till we, in our turn, grew peevish, fretful, discontented, and full of melancholy complaints, “How wicked the world is grown! How much better it was, when we were young, in the golden days that we can remember!”

10. But let us endeavour, without prejudice or prepossession, to take a view of the whole affair. And upon cool and impartial consideration, it will appear that the former days were not better than these: yea, on the contrary, that these are in many respects, beyond comparison better than they. It will clearly appear, that as the stature of men was nearly the same from the beginning of the world, so the understanding of men, in similar circumstances, has been much the same, from the time of GOD's bringing a flood upon the earth unto the present hour. We have no reason to believe that the uncivilized nations of *Africa*, *America*, or the *South-Sea* islands, had ever a better understanding, or were in a less barbarous state than they are now. Neither on the other hand, have we any sufficient proof, that the natural understandings of men in the most civilized countries, *Babylon*, *Persia*, *Greece* or *Italy*, were stronger or more improved than those of the *Germans*, *French* or *English* now alive. Nay, have we not reason to believe, that by means of better instruments we have attained that knowledge of nature, which few, if any of the ancients, ever attained? So that in this respect, the advantage (and not a little one) is clearly on our side: and we ought to acknowledge with deep thankfulness to the Giver of every good gift, That the former days were not to be compared to these wherein we live.



11. But the principal enquiry still remains. Were not *the former days better than these*, with regard to virtue? or to speak more properly, religion? This deserves a full consideration.

By religion I mean, the love of GOD and man, filling the heart and governing the life. The sure effect of this is, the uniform practice of justice, mercy, and truth. This is the very essence of it, the height and depth of religion, detached from this or that opinion, and from all particular modes of worship. And I would calmly enquire, which of the former times were better than these, with regard to this? to the religion experienced and practised by archbishop *Fenelon*, in *France*; bishop *Kenn*, in *England*; and bishop *Bedell*, in *Ireland*?

12. We need not extend our enquiry beyond the period when life and immortality were brought to light by the gospel. And it is allowed, that the days immediately succeeding the pouring out of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, were better even in this respect, even with regard to religion, than any which have succeeded them.

But setting aside this short age of golden days, I must repeat the question, which of the former days were better than the present, in every known part of the habitable world?

13. Was the former part of this century better, either in these islands, or in any part of the continent? I know no reason at all to affirm this. I believe every part of *Europe* was full as void of religion in the reign of queen *Anne*, as it is at this day. It is true, luxury increases to a high degree, in every part of *Europe*: and so does the scandal of *England*, profaneness, in every part of the kingdom. But it is also true, that the most infernal of all vices, cruelty, does as swiftly decrease. And such instances of it as in times past continually occurred, are now very seldom heard of. Even in war, that savage barbarity which was every where practised, has been discontinued for many years.

14. Was the last century more religious than this? In the former part of it there was much of the form of religion.

gion. And some undoubtedly experienced the power thereof. But how soon did the fine gold become dim! How soon was it so mingled with worldly design, and with a total contempt both of truth, justice and mercy, as brought that scandal upon all religion, which is hardly removed to this day? Was there more true religion in the preceding century, the age of the Reformation? There was doubtless in many countries a considerable reformation of religious opinions; yea, and of modes of worship, which were much changed for the better, both in *Germany* and several other places. But it is well known, that *Luther* himself complained, almost with his dying breath, “The people that are called by my name (though I wish they were called only by the name of Christ) are reformed as to their opinions and modes of worship; but their tempers and lives are the same they were before.” Even then, both justice and mercy were so shamelessly trodden under foot, that an eminent writer computes the number of those that were slaughtered, during those religious contests, to have been no less than forty millions, within the compass of forty years!

15. We may step back above a thousand years from this, without finding any better time. No historian gives us the least intimation of any such, till we come to the age of *Constantine the Great*. Of this period several writers have given us most magnificent accounts. Yea, one eminent author, no less a man than *Dr. Newton*, the late bishop of *Bristol*, has been at no small pains to shew, that the conversion of *Constantine* to christianity, and the emoluments which he bestowed upon the church with an unsparing hand, were the event which is signified in the Revelation, by the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven!

16. But I cannot in anywise subscribe to the bishop’s opinion in this matter. So far from it, that I have been long convinced from the whole tenor of ancient history, that this very event, *Constantine’s* calling himself a christian, and pouring in that flood of wealth and power on the christian church, the clergy in particular, was productive of more evil to the church, than all the ten persecutions put together.



ther. From the time that power, riches, and honour of all kinds, were heaped upon the christians, vice of all kinds came in like a flood, both on the clergy and laity. From the time that the church and state, the kingdoms of Christ and of the world, were so strangely and unnaturally blended together, christianity and heathenism were so thoroughly incorporated with each other, that they will hardly ever be divided, till Christ comes to reign upon earth. So that instead of fancying that the glory of the *New Jerusalem* covered the earth at that period, we have terrible proof, that it was then, and has ever since been covered, with the smoke of the bottomless pit.

17. "However, were not the days antecedent to this, those of the third century, better beyond all comparison, than any that followed them?" This has been almost universally believed. Few doubt but in the age before *Constantine*, the christian church was in its glory, worshipping GOD in the beauty of holiness. But was it so indeed? What says *St. Cyprian*, who lived in the midst of that century, a witness above all exception, and one that sealed the truth with his blood? What account does he give, of what he saw with his own eyes, and heard with his own ears? Such an one as would almost make one imagine he was painting to the life, not the ancient church of *Carthage*, but the modern church of *Rome*. According to his account, such abominations even then prevailed over all orders of men, that it was not strange GOD poured out his fury upon them in blood, by the grievous persecutions which followed.

18. Yea, and before this, even in the first century, even in the apostolic age, what account does *St. John* give of several of the churches, which he himself had planted in *Asia*? How little were those congregations better than many in *Europe*, at this day? Nay, forty or fifty years before that, within thirty years of the descent of the Holy Ghost, were there not such abominations in the church of *Corinth*, as were not even named among the heathens? So early did the *mystery of iniquity* begin to work in the christian

stian church! So little reason have we to appeal to the former days, as though they were *better than these!*

19. To affirm this therefore, as commonly as it is done, is not only contrary to truth, but is an instance of black ingratitude to GOD, and a grievous affront to his blessed Spirit. For whoever makes a fair and candid enquiry, will easily perceive, that true religion has in nowise decreased, but greatly increased in the present century. To instance in one capital branch of religion, the love of our neighbour. Is not persecution well nigh vanished away from the face of the earth? In what age did christians of various denominations shew such forbearance toward each other? When before was such lenity shewn by governors toward their respective subjects? Not only in *Great-Britain* and *Ireland*; but in *France* and *Germany*, yea, every part of *Europe*? Nothing like this has been seen since the time of *Constantine*; no, not since the time of the apostles.

20. If it be said, “Why, this is the fruit of the general infidelity, the deism which has overspread all *Europe*.” I answer, whatever be the cause, we have reason greatly to rejoice in the effect. And if the all-wise GOD has brought so great and universal a good out of this dreadful evil, so much the more should we magnify his astonishing power, wisdom, and goodness herein. Indeed so far as we can judge, this was the most direct way, whereby *nominal* christians could be prepared, first for tolerating, and afterwards for receiving *real* christianity. While the governors were themselves unacquainted with it, nothing but this could induce them to suffer it. O the depth both of the wisdom and knowledge of GOD! causing a total disregard for all religion, to pave the way for the revival of the only religion, which was worthy of GOD!

21. But above all this, while luxury and profaneness have been increasing on the one hand, on the other, benevolence and compassion toward all the forms of human woe, have increased in a manner not known before, from the earliest ages of the world. In proof of this, we see more hospitals, infirmaries, and other places of public charity, have been erected, at least in and near *London*, within  
this



this century, than in five hundred years before. And suppose this has been owing in part to vanity, desire of praise, yet have we cause to bless GOD, that so much good has sprung even from this imperfect motive.

22. I cannot forbear mentioning one instance more, of the goodness of GOD to us in the present age. He has lifted up a standard in our islands, both against luxury, profaneness, and vice of every kind. He caused near fifty years ago, as it were, a grain of mustard-seed to be sown near *London*, and it has now grown and put forth great branches, reaching from sea to sea. Two or three poor people met together, in order to help each other to be real christians. They increased to hundreds, to thousands, to myriads, still pursuing their one point, real religion, the love of GOD and man, ruling all their tempers, words, and actions. Now I will be bold to say, such an event as this, considered in all its circumstances, has not been seen on earth before, since the time that *St. John* went to *Abraham's* bosom.

23. Shall we now say, *The former days were better than these?* GOD forbid we should be so unwise and so unthankful. Nay, rather let us praise him all the day long; for he hath dealt bountifully with us. No *former time* since the apostles left the earth, has been *better than the present*. None has been comparable to it in several respects. We are not born out of due time, but in the day of his power, a day of glorious salvation, wherein he is hastening to renew the whole race of mankind in righteousness and true holiness. How bright hath the sun of righteousness already shone on various parts of the earth? And how many gracious showers has he already poured down upon his inheritance? How many precious souls has he already gathered into his garner, as ripe flocks of corn? May we be always ready to follow them, crying in our hearts, "Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!"

Dublin, June 27, 1787.

*A short Account of the Revival of the Work of GOD, at  
Manchester, &c.*

*To the Editor of the Arminian Magazine.*

Sir,

FOR some time we have hardly ever preached, but one, two, or more have returned thanks, either for a sense of pardon, or for having their backslidings healed, or for experiencing that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin.

On Monday evening last, we had a good time while keeping the love-feast. After a few had spoken of the goodness of GOD, the fire was kindled, so that some began to weep, others to tremble, and several to roar out for the disquietude of their souls. We then left off conversing, and spent an hour in singing and prayer; when the cry was still the same. After we had dismissed the people, many returned to pray with those who would not depart without a blessing: on which their cries and agonies became much greater than before. After some time four or five declared that GOD had turned their captivity into joy! We had such another love-feast at *Middleton* on new-year's day.

In about three weeks, more than twenty have found peace with GOD, while others have been either awakened, quickened, comforted, or healed: and we are not without hopes of seeing greater things here in a short time.

J. ALLEN.

*Jan. 3, 1783.*



## AN EXTRACT

Of the Revd. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 235.]

18. **I** AM not careful to answer in this matter. It is not my part to say, Whether GOD hath done good by my hands, Whether I have a particular turn of mind for this, or not: and whether want of success (where our attempts did not succeed) was owing to imprudence, or to other causes. But the latter part of the objection, "That one who is despised can do no good, That without reputation on a man cannot be useful," being the strong-hold of all the unbelieving, the vainglorious, the cowardly christians (so called) I will, by the grace of GOD, see, What reason there is for this, thus continually to exalt itself against the gospel of Christ.

19. With regard to contempt then (under which word I include all the passions that border upon it, as hate, envy, &c. and all the fruits that spring from it, such as calumny and persecution in all its forms) my first position in defiance of worldly wisdom, is, *Every true christian is contemned wherever he lives, by all who are not so, and who know him to be such*: that is, in effect, by all with whom he converses, since it is impossible for light not to shine. This position I prove, both from the example of our Lord, and his express assertion. First, from his example: *If the disciple is not above his Master; nor the servant above his Lord*, then as our Master was despised and rejected of men, so will every one of his true disciples. But *the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord*. Therefore, the consequence will not fail him a hair's breadth. I prove this secondly, from his own express assertion of this consequence. *If they have called the Master of the house Bezebut, how much more them of his household? Remember (ye that would fain forget or evade this) the word which I said unto you, the servant is not greater than the Lord: if they*  
have

*Have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.* And as for that vain hope, *That this belongs only to the first followers of Christ, hear ye him; All these things they will do unto you, because they know not him that sent me.* And again, *Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Both the persons who are hated, the persons who hate them, and the cause of their hating them are here set down. *The hated* are all that are not of the world, that know and love GOD; *The haters* are all that are of the world, that know not, and love not GOD. *The cause of their hatred* is the entire, irreconcilable difference, between their designs, judgments, and affections: because these know not GOD, and those are determined to know and pursue nothing beside him. These esteem and love the world; and those count it dung and dross, and singly desire the love of Christ.

20. My next position is this: *Till he is thus despised, no man is in a state of salvation.* And this is a plain consequence of the former: for if all that are *not of the world*, are therefore despised by those that are, then till a man is despised, he is *of the world*, that is, out of a state of salvation. Nor is it possible for all the trimmers between GOD and the world, to elude the consequence, unless they can prove, that a man may be *of the world*, and yet be in a state of salvation. I must therefore, with or without the consent of these, keep close to my Saviour's judgment, and maintain, that contempt is a part of the cross, which every man bears who follows him: that it is the badge of his discipleship, the stamp of his profession, the constant seal of his calling; insomuch that though a man may be despised without being saved, yet he cannot be saved, without being despised.

21. I should not spend any more words on this great truth, but that it is at present voted out of the world. The masters in *Israel*, learned men, men of renown, seem absolutely to have forgotten it: nay, and censure those who have not forgotten the words of their Lord, as *setters forth of strange doctrine.* Yet they who hearken to GOD rather than man, must lay down one strange position more, *That the being despised is absolutely necessary to our doing good*



*in the world: if not, to our doing some good (for GOD may work by Judas) yet to our doing so much good as we otherwise might: seeing we must know GOD, if we would fully teach others to know him. But if we do, we must be despised of them that know him not. Where then is the scribe? Where is the wise? Where is the disputer of this world? Where is the replier against GOD, with his sage maxims, "He that is despised can do no good in the world: to be useful, a man must be esteemed: to advance the glory of GOD, you must have a fair reputation."—Saith the world so? Well; what saith the scripture? Why, that GOD hath laughed all this heathen wisdom to scorn. It saith, that twelve despised followers of a despised Master, all of whom were of no reputation, who were esteemed as the filth and off-scouring of the world, did more good in it, than all the twelve tribes of Israel. It saith, that their despised Master left an exprefs declaration to us and to our children, Blessed are ye (not accursed with the heavy curse of doing no good, of being useless in the world) when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil of you falsely for my name's sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven.*

22. These are a part of my reasons for choosing to abide as yet in the station wherein I now am. As to the flock committed to your care, whom you have many years fed with the sincere milk of the word, I trust in GOD, your labour shall not be in vain. Some of them you have seen gathered into the garner. And for yourself, I doubt not, when your warfare is accomplished, when you are made perfect through sufferings, you shall follow the children whom GOD hath given you, full of years and victories. And he that took care of those poor sheep before you was born, will not forget them when you are dead.

*Thursday, March 29.* I left London, and in the evening expounded to a small company at Basingstoke. *Saturday 31.* In the evening I reached Bristol, and met Mr. Whitefield there. I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday; having been all my life (till very lately)

so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls *almost a sin*, if it had not been done *in a church*.

*April 1.* In the evening (Mr. *Whitefield* being gone) I begun expounding our Lord's sermon on the mount (one pretty remarkable precedent of *field-preaching*, I suppose *there were churches* at that time also) to a little society which was accustomed to meet once or twice a week in *Nicholas-street*.

*Monday 2.* At four in the afternoon, I submitted to be *more vile*, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people. The scripture on which I spoke was this (is it possible any one should be ignorant, that it is fulfilled in every true minister of Christ) *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind: to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*

At 7 I began expounding the *Acts of the Apostles*, to a society-meeting in *Baldwin-street*: and the next day, the gospel of St. *John* in the chapel at *Newgate*; where I also daily read the morning service of the church.

*Wednesday 4.* At *Baptist-Mills* (a sort of a suburb or village about half a mile from *Bristol*) I offered the grace of GOD to about fifteen hundred persons, from these words, *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely.*

In the evening three women agreed to meet together weekly, with the same intention as those at *London*, viz. *To confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another, that they may be healed.* At 8, four young men agreed to meet, in pursuance of the same design. How dare any man deny this to be (as to the substance of it) a means of grace, ordained by GOD; unless he will affirm (with *Luther* in the fury of his solifidianism) that St. *James's* epistle, is an epistle of straw?

*Thursday 5.* At 5 in the evening I began at a society in *Castle-street*, expounding the epistle to the *Romans*; and the

next



next evening at a society in *Gloucester-Lane*, the first epistle of *St. John*. On Saturday evening at *Weavers-Hall* also, I begun expounding the epistle to the *Romans*, and declared that gospel to all, which is the power of GOD unto salvation, to every one that believeth.

Sunday 8. At 7 in the morning I preached to about a thousand persons at *Bristol*, and afterwards to about fifteen hundred, on the top of *Hannam-Mount* in *Kingswood*. I called to them in the words of the evangelical prophet, *Ho! Every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; come and buy wine and milk without money, and without price*. About five thousand were in the afternoon at *Rose-Green* (on the other side of *Kingswood*) among whom I stood and cried, in the name of the Lord, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water*.

Tuesday 10. I was desired to go to *Bath*; where I offered to about a thousand souls, the free grace of GOD to *heal their backslidings*, and in the morning to (I believe) more than two thousand, I preached to about the same number, at *Baptist-Mills* in the afternoon, on *Christ made of GOD unto us; wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption*.

Saturday 14. I preached at the poor-house: three or four hundred were within, and more than twice that number without; to whom I explained those comfortable words, *When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both*.

Sunday 15. I explained at 7 to five or six thousand persons, the story of the Pharisee and the publican. About three thousand were present at *Hannam-Mount*. I preached at *Newgate* after dinner to a crowded congregation. Between 5 and 6 we went to *Rose-Green*: it rained hard at *Bristol*, but not a drop fell upon us, while I declared to about five thousand, *Christ our wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption*. I concluded the day by shewing at the society in *Baldwin-street*, that his blood cleanseth us from all sin.

Tuesday 17. At 5 in the afternoon I was at a little society in the *Back-Lane*. The room in which we were was prop-  
ped

ped beneath; but the weight of the people made the floor give way, so that in the beginning of the expounding, the post which propped it, fell down with a great noise. But the floor sunk no further, so that after a little surprise at first they quietly attended to the things that were spoken.

Thence I went to *Baldwin-street*, and expounded as it came in course, the iv. chap. of the *Acts*. We then called upon GOD, to confirm his word. Immediately one that stood by (to our no small surprise) cried out aloud, with the utmost vehemence, even as in the agonies of death. But we continued in prayer, till *a new song was put in her mouth, a thanksgiving unto our GOD*. Soon after, two other persons (well known in this place, as labouring to live in all good conscience towards all men) were seized with strong pain, and constrained to *roar for the disquietness of their heart*. But it was not long before they likewise burst forth into praise to GOD their saviour. The last who called upon GOD as out of the belly of hell, was *I—E—*, a stranger in *Bristol*. And in a short space he also was overwhelmed with joy and love, knowing that GOD had healed his backslidings. So many living witnesses hath GOD given, that *his hand is still stretched out to heal*, and that *signs and wonders are even now wrought by his holy child Jesus*.

*Wednesday 18.* In the evening *L—a S—* (late a Quaker, but baptized the day before) *R—a M—*, and a few others, were admitted into the society. But *R—a M—* was scarcely able, either to speak or look up. *The sorrows of death compassed her about, the pains of hell got hold upon her*. We poured out our complaints before GOD, and shewed him of her trouble. And he soon shewed, he is a GOD that beareth prayer. She felt in herself, that *being justified freely, she had peace with GOD, through Jesus Christ*. She rejoiced in hope of the glory of GOD, and the love of GOD was shed abroad in her heart.

*April 20.* Being Good-Friday, *E—th R—n, T—W—*, and one or two others, first knew they had redemption in the blood of Christ, the remission of their sins.

*Saturday*



*Saturday 21.* At *Weavers-Hall* a young man was suddenly seized with a violent trembling all over, and in a few minutes, *the sorrows of his heart being enlarged*, sunk down to the ground. But we ceased not calling upon GOD, till he raised him up full of *peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*.

On *Easter-Day*, it being a thorough rain, I could only preach at *Newgate* at 8 in the morning, and two in the afternoon; in a house near *Hannam-Mount* at 11; and in one near *Rose-Green* at 5. At the society in the evening, many were cut to the heart, and many comforted.

*Monday 23.* On a repeated invitation I went to *Pensford*, about five miles from *Bristol*. I sent to the minister, to ask leave to preach in the church, but having waited some time and received no answer, I called on many of the people who were gathered together in an open place, *If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink*. At 4 in the afternoon there were above three thousand, in a convenient place near the city, to whom I declared, *The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of GOD, and they that hear shall live*.

I preached at *Bath* to about a thousand on *Tuesday* morning, and at 4 in the afternoon to the poor colliers, at a place about the middle of *Kingswood*, called *Two Mile-hill*. In the evening at *Baldwin-street*, a young man, after a sharp (though short) agony, both of body and mind, found his soul filled with peace, *knowing in whom he had believed*.

*Wednesday 24.* To above two thousand at *Baptist-Mills*, I explained that glorious scripture (describing the state of every true believer in Christ, every one who by faith is born of GOD) *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father*.

[Continued at page 334.]

## THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

## THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[Continued from page 244.]

“ **A**T table, every one is furnished with a spoon and a fork, but with no knives. And in general, they are not needful: for both flesh and vegetables are so stewed down, as to be properly termed spoon-meat. However, at the meanest inn, every one is provided with a clean napkin: and both after dinner and after supper, there is a fine dessert of fruit.

“ We travelled early and late: yet having but one set of horses, we were a whole week in getting to *Paris*. In *Paris* all is gaiety and finery; but without the least idea of neatness. The scarcity of water is one excuse for the general want of cleanliness, both in their persons and houses.

“ On Tuesday, Dec. 8, we dined at *Portallier*, the prettiest town in all *France*. The reason of which is, being burnt down some years ago, it was rebuilt by the late king. The next morning we entered *Switzerland*, stepping over a brook, which divides *Switzerland* from *France*. On the *French* side of the brook is a cross: on the other, a pillar with the arms of *Switzerland*. In the evening we arrived at *Lausanne*, a famous old town. Here I remained the next day, and on Friday, the eleventh, went on to *Nyon*, where I had the pleasure of finding our dear friend, in pretty good health and spirits. Mr. *Fletcher's* house is a fine large building, agreeably situated. It is in the form of a castle, and is supposed to have been built five hundred years ago.

“ In passing through *France*, how bitterly did I regret the want of the Sunday-service! And it was not much better with me when I came into *Switzerland*. For I understood so little of their language, that I could not profit much by the public service. Indeed this loss is in some measure



measure made up by the company and conversation of Mr. *Fletcher*: who, however engaged he is the greater part of the day, is generally so kind as to spend a little time with me in the evening in prayer and conversation.

“ His chief delight seems to be in the meeting of his little society of children. And as he is exceeding fond of them, they appear to be altogether as fond of him. He seldom either walks abroad or rides out, but some of them follow him, singing the hymns they have learned, and conversing with him by the way. But you must not suppose, that he is permitted to enjoy this happiness unmolested. Not only the drunkards make songs upon him and his little companions, but many of the clergy loudly complain of such irregular proceedings. However he is upon good terms with the three ministers of the place, all of whom are not only serious men, but desirous of promoting true religion.

“ He is certainly stronger, and in better health, than he was when he left *England*. But as soon as ever he ventures to preach, his spitting of blood returns. Whenever this happens, his strength and spirits decay surprisngly, which he cannot in anywise recover, but by lying by for some days.

“ Whether I succeed in my temporal business or not, I shall ever remember with pleasure and thankfulness the opportunities I have been blest with of spending so much time in company with our inestimable friend: who, wherever he goes, preaches the gospel both by his words and example; nay, by his very looks, not only to his friends, but to all he meets with. So that on the top of the frozen *Alps*, and in the dreary vale of *Chateau d'Oex*, some good seed has been sown.

“ When my business constrained me to go to *Chateau d'Oex*, Mr. *Fletcher* bore me company. And here also he was visited by some of the principal inhabitants of the town: who stood round him in deep attention for almost an hour, while he both exhorted and prayed.

I am, dear Sir,

Your very sincere Friend and Servant,

WILLIAM PERRONE T.

16. Mr. *Fletcher* adds upon the same paper, "Thanks to our kind preserver, I am yet in the land of faith and hope, and want to find and make it a land of happiness and love. The Lord Jesus is alone sufficient for this. And till the great out-pouring of his love is come, we ought faithfully to stir up the gift of GOD, which is in ourselves and others, and to supply by the depth of our humility, and the ardour of our expectation, what is yet wanting to our experience. Well: GOD is good: Jesus is faithful: the Spirit is truth and love. Come, Lord! And we shall experience the power of that GOD, who turns death to life, darkness to light, weakness to strength; and *calleteth the things that are not as though they were.*"

17. Mr. *Perronet* in another letter to Mr. *Greenwood*, dated May 22, writes thus:

"My dear friend is much better in health now, than he was in the winter. He preached last Sunday se'nnight in the church. He spoke with a strong, clear voice for above three quarters of an hour: and did not find himself hurt by it. But when he rode out in the afternoon, his horse dropped down as if he had been shot, and cut both his knees, as well as his head. Yet Mr. *Fletcher* was no way hurt.

"On Good-Friday, there being no service here, Mr. *Fletcher* and I crossed the lake into *Savoy*, in order to hear a celebrated capuchin, who was to preach that day. He made a very good discourse: and afterwards he and his brethren invited us to dine with them. This we declined but after dinner paid our respects to them. And we spent two or three agreeable hours in serious and friendly conversation."

18. About this time Mr. *Fletcher* wrote to a friend thus:

"Let us bear with patience the decays of nature: let us see without fear the approach of death. We must put off this sickly, corruptible body, in order to put on the immortal and glorious garment.

"I have some hopes that my poor sister will yet be my sister in Christ. Her self-righteousness, I trust, breaks as



fast as her body. I am come hither to see death make havock among my friends. I wear mourning for my father's brother, and for my brother's son. The same mourning will serve me for my dying sister, if I do not go before her. She lies on the same bed where my father and mother died, and where she and I were born. How near is death to life! But, blessed be GOD! Christ, the resurrection, is nearer to the weak, dying believer! Death works through the body, and the resurrection through the soul. And our soul is our real self."

19. I believe it was about the same time, that a remarkable passage occurred, which was related to me some years ago. I may possibly have forgot some circumstances: but the substance of it was this. Mr. *Fletcher* having heard of a minister in the country, as an eminently pious man, had a great desire to see him, and for that purpose one morning set out very early. When he had walked several miles, he saw a great crowd gathered together at the door of a house. He asked, What was the matter? And was answered, "A poor woman and her child lie dying." He went in, and found a woman who had not long been delivered, in appearance very near death. Little better was the case of the infant, which was convulsed from head to foot. The room was filled with people. He took occasion to shew them from that melancholy spectacle, the dreadful effects of sin: and afterwards spoke largely, of the miserable state we are all in through the sin of our first parent. He then expatiated on the second *Adam*, and the blessings we may receive through him: adding, He is able to raise the dead! He is able to save you all from sin, as well as save these two poor objects from death. Come, let us ask him, to save both us and them. He found remarkable liberty in prayer. Presently the child's convulsions ceased; and the mother was easy, lively and strong. The people were utterly amazed, and stood speechless and almost senseless! While they were in this state, he silently withdrew. When they came to themselves, he was gone. Many of them asked, "Who it could be?" and some said, "Certainly it was an angel."

20. When

20. When he had a little recovered his strength, he made a tour through *Italy*, and paid a visit to *Rome*. While he was here, as Mr. *Ireland* and he were one day going through one of the streets in a coach, they were informed, "The pope was coming forward, and it would be required of them to come out of the coach, and kneel while he went by, as all the people did; if they did not, in all probability the zealous mob would fall upon them, and knock them on the head." But this, whatever might be the consequence, they flatly refused to do; judging the paying such honour to a man, was neither better nor worse than idolatry. The coachman was exceedingly terrified, not knowing what to do. However, at length he made shift to turn aside into a narrow way. The pope was in an open landau. He waved his hands as if he had been swimming; and frequently repeated these words, "GOD bless you all!" Mr. *Fletcher's* spirit was greatly stirred, and he longed to bear a public testimony against anti-christ. And he would undoubtedly have done it, had he been able to speak Italian. He could hardly refrain from doing it in Latin, till he considered that only the priests could have understood him. One to whom he related this, saying, "If he had done this, the multitude would have torn him in pieces:" he answered, "I believe the pope himself would have prevented it; for he was a man of sense and humanity."

21. While he was at *Paris*, he was desired to visit and pray with a sick woman. Information of this was quickly given to a magistrate, with abundance of aggravation. In consequence of this, an order was procured from the king himself for the apprehending him. This might not improbably have cost him his life, or at least, a long and expensive imprisonment. When the officer came to the door of the house where he lodged, Mr. *Ireland* stepped out and said, "Sir, have you a warrant for *me*?" He (supposing him to be Mr. *Fletcher*) answered, "I have; you must come with me." Mr. *Ireland* went very quietly with him. But when they came before the magistrate, the accuser said, "This is not the man: I know nothing of this



this gentleman." Another messenger was then sent; but before he came to the house, Mr. *Fletcher* was too far off to be overtaken.

21. While he was at *Nyon*, he wrote (among many other letters) to good, old Mr. *Perronet* as follows:

Feb. 8, 1779.

"Honoured and dear father in Christ,

"I have had the pleasure of accompanying your son to your father's birth-place. It is a charming country for those who have a taste for highland prospects. But what is it to our heavenly Father's hill of Sion? Thither may we all travel, summer and winter, and there may we all have a happy meeting, and an eternal inheritance."

23. Sept. 7. Mr. *William Perronet* wrote a little farther account of him. "Mr. *Fletcher*," says he, "has preached here (at *Nyon*) in the church, and might have preached much oftener, if his health would have permitted; for his friendly and prudent behaviour has won upon all the three ministers, so that they are now on the best terms with him. But a new difficulty has lately arisen. He has been summoned before the *seigneur bailiff*, who sharply reprehended him (noble bailiff indeed! worthy of his office!) for preaching against sabbath-breaking, which he said, implied a censure of the magistrates, as if they neglected their duty. He reprimanded him also for preaching against stage-plays, which he considered as a reflection on himself, as he had just then sent for a company of French comedians to *Nyon*. In consequence of this, he forbid his exercising the function of a minister in this country. However one of the ministers has ventured to give him a room in his own house. Here he preaches two or three times a week to a few serious persons and abundance of children. His lordship has not yet thought proper to interfere, although the thing is no secret. And not only the seriousness, but also the number of the congregation increases daily."

24. In

24. In the next year, 1780, Mr. *Fletcher* fully intended to return to *England*. But not long after, he wrote as follows, to one of his parishioners at *Madeley*.

“ I have the more readily complied with the request of my friends, to stay here [at *Nyon*] a little longer, as it was so earnestly backed by the little society which is gathered in this place. About three weeks ago, they got about me, and besought me on their knees, with many tears, to stay till they were a little stronger, and able to stand alone. Nor would they be persuaded to rise, till they had got me to comply. Happy would it be for us all, if we prayed so earnestly to Him, who can give substantial blessings!

“ Two days ago I went to *Geneva*, and spoke to a carrier to take me back to *London*. But his coach was full. Yesterday another came, and said, he would take us at a fortnight's notice. The Lord is always ready to give us a lift to the kingdom of grace, through which we must pass to the kingdom of glory. The comfort of this journey is, that we may travel all together, though our bodies are far asunder. For Christ the Way, is every where, and faith is (like his word) one and the same in every age and place. So is holiness: for in all places we may love GOD with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. I hope you, and all your brethren, travel thus: and that you journey like *St. Paul*, who travelled so hard, that he was *running a race*, for a prize, a crown of life.”

25. In spring, 1781, he set out for *England*. But Mr. *Perronet* was then exceeding ill, having all the symptoms of an approaching consumption. He could not therefore keep pace with Mr. *Fletcher*: who being on his journey wrote to him as follows:

Lyons, April 6, 1781.

“ My dear friend,

“ We are both weak, and both afflicted; but Jesus careth for us. He is every where. He has all power to deliver us, and perhaps by ways we little think of. It was of the Lord, that you did not come with me: you would have



have been sick as I am. I am overdone with riding and preaching: indeed twice I preached in the fields. I carry home with me much weakness: the Lord's will be done. I know I am called to suffer and die. Let us believe and rejoice in the Lord Jesus!"

He returned to *England* in the summer, in tolerable health, being quite recovered from his consumption. Calling at *London*, he preached at the new chapel, slept at *Newington*, and the next day set out for *Bristol*. He stayed there only a short time, and then retired to Mr. *Ireland's* at *Bristolington*: who, as soon as he was capable, willingly accompanied him to his beloved *Madeley*.

26. But he did not find such cause of rejoicing here, as he had fondly expected. This may be easily gathered from the letter he then wrote to his friend at *Newington*. It runs thus:

Madeley, June 12, 1781.

" My very dear friend,

" I stayed longer at *Bristolington* than I designed. Mr. *Ireland* was ill, and would nevertheless come hither with me: so that I was obliged to stay till he was better. And indeed it was well that I did not come without him: for he has helped me to regulate my outward affairs, which were in great confusion. Mr. *Graves* leaves me: and I will either leave *Madeley*, or have an assistant able to stir among the people: for I had much rather be gone than stay here, to see the dead bury their dead. Well, we shall soon remove out of all, and rest from our little cares and labours. You do not forget, I hope, that you have need of patience, as well as I, to inherit the promises, the best and greatest of which are not sealed but to such as keep the word of Christ's patience, and such as persevere with him in his temptations. Hold on then patient faith and joyful hope! If I were by you, I would preach to your heart and my own, a lecture on this text, *We are saved by hope*, and by a faith which is never stronger than when it is contrary to all the feelings of flesh and blood.

" Pray

“ Pray what news of the glory? Does the glory of the Lord fill the temple, your house, your heart? A cloud is over my poor parish: but alas! it is not the luminous cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night. Even the few remaining professors stared at me the other day, when I preached to them on these words, *Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: for the promise is unto you.* Well, the promise is unto *us*; if others despise it, still let us believe and hope. Nothing enlarges the heart, and awakens the soul more, than that believing, loving expectation. Let us wait together, until we are all endued with power from on high.”

## C H A P. VII.

### *Of his Marriage.*

1. **A**LTHOUGH the great apostle has ranked *the forbidding to marry* among the *doctrines of devils*, and has expressly declared, *Marriage is honourable to all men, and the bed undefiled*: yet a kind of prejudice hangs on the minds of many even of those that love GOD, inclining them to disapprove of the marriage of persons eminent in religion. Yea, many are of opinion that it is not consistent with high degrees of holiness: and that when any who have deep experience in the things of GOD marry, they are in some measure fallen from grace. Hence many were surprised, that so eminent a christian as Mr. *Fletcher* should take this step. And they could hardly help thinking, that he had lost some degree of his excellent piety, and that he was not so unreservedly devoted to GOD as he had been some time before.

2. In order to satisfy every reasonable person, that he had not sustained any loss at all, that his entire self-devotion was in nowise impaired, either before, or at the time of his marriage, I believe the most convincing way will be, to give as particular an account as possible of what occurred at that time. The account is given by one that was an eye and ear-witness of what she relates; and whoever



ever seriously considers this account will easily perceive; that his soul was at that time all alive, and wholly devoted to GOD. And I cannot but recommend this whole transaction to the imitation of all christians who enter the holy state of matrimony.

3. As I think it highly expedient to premise some account of the person whom Mr. *Fletcher* chose as his companion for life, I am glad to find this done to my hand, in the letter which I shall now subjoin:

“ Rev. Sir,

“ I think it my privilege, and have often found it a blessing, to comply with the request of my honoured father, which I now do also in great love to my valuable and much esteemed friends, Mr. and Mrs. *Fletcher*. I will therefore endeavour with the assistance of my gracious Lord, to recollect, and acquaint you with some particulars of the life and character of these truly devoted servants of GOD; with whose intimate acquaintance I have been favoured for near thirty years. But indeed I feel my great insufficiency to relate what might be said with the strictest truth of these worthies.

“ My acquaintance with Mrs. *Fletcher* began when she was about seventeen years of age. She had from her early childhood been strongly drawn to seek the Crucified, and was now athirst for a clean heart, and longed to have a right spirit renewed within her. Nor did her desire to love GOD with all her heart, lessen but increase her love to her neighbour; as I, the most unworthy, am well able to testify, to whom she has been a tried friend, even to the present hour.

[Continued at page 340.]

*The* JOURNAL of FRANCIS ASBURY, *Bishop of the*  
*Methodist-Episcopal Church.*

From March 26, 1772, to April 14, 1773.

[Continued from page 251.]

**T**HURSDAY, October 22. In the morning preached over the river, and in the evening at *Trenton*, with some assistance. And many young people attended.

Friday 23. In the morning at 5, preached over the ferry, and in the evening at *Trenton*. Glory to GOD! I have found peace, and power, and love.

Saturday 24. Leaving my horse at *Bristol*, I went to *Burlington*; and on the Lord's day my spirit was much dejected, though in preaching I felt greatly assisted; and divine truth reached the hearts of the people.

Monday 26. After preaching at 5, left them in peace; and preached in the evening at *Philadelphia*. All things considered, the people here seemed to be quiet and in good order.

On Tuesday preached both morning and evening. *Richard Sause* and myself set out on Wednesday for *Bohemia*, and on our way we found a few friends at *Newcastle* that had not deserted the cause. In this journey I called at *Chester* gaol, and saw the prisoners, who all seemed hardened to a man; and among them were the wretched three that I saw escape the gallows before: two of these had behaved so badly that they were now in chains. Lord, what is man? And what am I without thy grace? Keep me, keep me, holy Lord, and never let me go. Let me die, rather than live to sin against thee. I spoke freely to one of them, who was a murderer.

Thursday 29. We reached *Bohemia*, where we found *S. H—y*, a man hearty in the cause, and of a good understanding; but his spirit is too warm and easily moved.



On Friday visited *E. and R. Thompson*, and saw their father, in his hundredth year, eating, drinking, smoking, talking, and sinning. He appeared as forgetful of eternity as if he had been at the most secure distance from its brink. It is well if his long life do not prove a curse in the end. I think, he told me that his father lived to be a hundred and nine, and never used spectacles.

Saturday 31. Rose early this morning, and purpose, through grace, to devote this day to GOD. I have travelled, since Monday week, one hundred and fifty miles; and it hath cost me about £.3, which must come out of my salary of £.24 per annum, as there is no allowance for my expences either by the society of *Philadelphia* or *York*.

Lord's day, November 1. After preaching at *Hersey's* in the morning, I intended to preach in the school-house in the afternoon; but it would not contain half the people; so I stood at the door, and the people without. Went to bed very unwell this evening, but rose at 5, and, feeling better, set off for *Susquehannah*. The next morning my soul longed for GOD. I felt a comfortable sense of his love in my heart, and can rejoice in him as my all-sufficient portion. In the afternoon we rode in company to the bay side. A few people, who came straggling after the time at Friend *Giles's*, felt themselves affected by the power of GOD. *Richard Webster* made one of the company; a man, who, I found by conversation, was a mystick, and very fond of Mr. *Law's* works; but he spoke well of the person of Christ. At Friend *Giles's*, the family was called together in the evening, and *Richard Webster* gave a moving exhortation. One person seemed affected. The next morning I rose at 5, my usual time, and spent one hour in solemn, secret prayer. Friend *Giles* treated me with great kindness, and pressed me to call again. I then went on to *Rocky-run*, and preached with life to a number of people, among whom were many Friends. For some days past, my mind has been blest with much peace; so that I experience a present salvation, and hope to experience that which is eternal. Thanks be to GOD for what I feel. Glory, glory be given to my dear and gracious Saviour.

Wednesday

Wednesday 4. This evening I had a very solemn family meeting; and spoke separately and pointedly to every one, both black and white.

On Thursday morning, rising at my usual time, I had a comfortable sense of GOD upon my heart. Glory be to thee, O Lord. After breakfast, Mrs. *Giles*, her brother, and myself set out for *Deer-creek*. We called at a Friends' meeting, and heard two men and a woman speak. They all spoke to purpose. We then proceeded to Mr. *Morgan's*, and unexpectedly found the people, at 2 o'clock, waiting to hear the word. I preached with liberty, and the power of GOD was felt in the hearts of many, though some of them were principal men. The man of the house looked *very* earnestly at me while I was preaching. I then published preaching at *S. L——'s*; where we had also a comfortable time. *S. L——* himself was deeply affected. He had been a ranting *Quaker*, and a rebellious man; but GOD hath touched his heart, and wrought a good work on several here. The next day, we proceeded to *Henry Waters's*; his brother is an exhorter, and now gone with Mr. *Williams* to *Virginia*. The Lord hath done great things for these people, notwithstanding the weakness of the instruments, and some *little* irregularities. Men who neither feared GOD, nor regarded man,—swearers, liars, cock-fighters, card-players, horse-racers, drunkards, &c. are now so changed as to become new men; and they are filled with the praises of GOD. This is the Lord's work, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Not unto us, O, Lord, not unto us; but unto thy name be all the glory!

Saturday 7. We had a powerful meeting at *Henry Waters's*; several gentlemen, from Mr. *Morgan's*, followed me, and seemed to give good attention to the things of GOD. Here I met with *Nicholas Waters*, an exhorter, who appears to be a serious and sensible man. After appointing to meet the exhorters at my return, I went to *S. Forward's*, and preached to many people; then preached at a place about three miles on my way back, and came to *Henry Waters's* again; where we had a very comfortable time.

Lord's



Lord's day 8. We had a very melting time indeed, while I preached to about two hundred souls from *Rom. vi. 17, 18.* We had also many people at *Richard Webber's*, while I preached, with liberty in my soul, from *1 Cor. iv. 20. The kingdom of GOD is not in word, but in power.* This day I have been free from evil, happy and joyful in my GOD. At the widow *Bond's* there were many people, both black and white, rich and poor, who were all exhorted to seek the Lord while he may be found. Some of the young men and women of this family are serious and thoughtful.

Tuesday 10. I enjoy peace and life in my soul; and am determined, through grace, to love and seek nothing but GOD. Preached to many people, both at *C. Baker's* in the morning, and at *I. Moore's* in the evening; and was favoured with freedom of soul.

Wednesday 11. Many people attended preaching at *Mr. Sinclair's*, among whom were some *Baptists* who went away muttering with their decrees. The congregation was also large at *Friend Stanford's*. I have read *Dr. Stonehouse* on the non-eternity of hell-torments. But by his arguments, we may as well prove the non-eternity of heavenly joys; for he calls it an *αιωνιον* life. Now if the *αιωνιον* life of saints arises from a principle of spiritual life derived from Christ; then the *αιωνιον* death of the wicked arises from a principle of spiritual death in them; and the one will come to an end as soon as the other.

Thursday 12. Preached at *Friend Galloway's*. There are some *Baptists* in this neighbourhood, who oppose the work under us; and perplex and trouble our young beginners; though they let me alone. Then returning to *Friend Chamberlain's*, the word flowed freely, while I preached to many people at 6 o'clock, from *2 Cor. v. 20. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though GOD did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to GOD.* Spoke on GOD's being reconciled to sinners, and shewed on what terms they might be reconciled to GOD, and that none but Christ could bring about a reconciliation. My mind was greatly enlarged while describing the character

character of gospel-ministers. Friday morning my soul was happy in GOD. I rode about eight miles to meet *John King*. Many people attended the word at Mr. G—'s; and after preaching *John King* came. We went together to town, and stayed all night. The next morning, I returned to *John C——*'s, where the congregation was large at 12 o'clock. This man's friends have rejected him on account of his religion. The family seem very serious; and I hope there will be a great and good work here. Then rode to *Richard Owen*'s, where some people came to see me, with whom we sung and prayed.

Tuesday 17. This morning found some peace and life in my soul; but want more retirement. My desire is, to be ever before the Lord. Many people attended the preaching, both in the forenoon and in the evening; and in the evening the congregation was much affected. The next morning went to Friend *Strawbridge*'s, and found his family well. Here we had Dr. W——d, and several polite people to dine with us. I spoke to the ladies about head-dresses; but the Doctor vindicated them, and said, that religion did not consist in dress. I quoted the words of *St. Peter*; but finding him a kind of free-thinker, staid about an hour, and then departed. We then rode to Friend *Derbin*'s, and spent some time with his family.

Thursday 19. Friend *Derbin* and I set off for *Frederica*. We came to *George Saxton*'s, where I expected to have preached, but there was a disappointment; so we pursued our way, though my little horse was unwell and very weary. A poor unhappy man abused me much on the road: he cursed, swore, and threw stones at me. But I found it my duty to talk to him, and show him his danger. *Frederica* is a neat little town, having one main street and three cross streets. It contains about a thousand houses, and the inhabitants are chiefly Germans. There are two German churches, one *Calvinist*, and one *Lutheran*. There is also one *English* church, and one *Roman* chapel. About five and twenty *Baptists* are the greatest enemies the *Methodists* have in this place. Many people came to hear me in this town, and I found life in preaching to them.

Friday



Friday 20. Found some peace of mind in the morning; but was forely buffeted by satan in the course of the day; had but few people in the evening, and but little power.

Saturday 21. My mind was greatly depressed. Not on account of any outward, known sin; but partly from the state of my body, and partly from a deep sense of the very great work in which I am employed. Do not know when I sunk into deeper distress: though, thank GOD, there was no condemnation.

Lord's day. After preaching in the morning with some freedom, Brother *John Haggerty*, his brother *Paul*, with Friend *Bonham*, and myself, set off to a place where I had to preach at 2 o'clock. Friend *Bonham* was awakened by the instrumentality of Friend *Strawbridge*; and he told me that he had been much opposed by the *Baptists*. He said, they had used him very ill; but he was determined to have no more connexion with them. He appears to be a solid, sensible man. Heard him give an exhortation much to the purpose; and gave him a note of recommendation, to do all the good he could. Happened in company with an old, stupid *Quaker* woman, who supposed me to be a half *Quaker*, and thought the Friends were the only people in the world, and that they were not fallen from their former lively and spiritual state. A man came twenty miles for me to go to preach a funeral discourse. I accordingly complied, and had many people to hear me. Then went about two miles, to preach at Mr. *Derbin's*; and met with a German minister, Mr. *Soap*, who heard me preach at both places. We had some conversation about the ordinances administered by Mr. *Strawbridge*. He advanced some reasons to urge the necessity of them, and said Mr. *Wesley* did not do well to hinder us from the administration of them. I told him they did not appear to me as essential to salvation; and that it did not appear to be my duty to administer the ordinances at *that time*.

[Continued at page 349.]

LETTER.

## L E T T E R.

[From Miss H. B. to the Rev. J. Wesley.]

*Wycombe, May 4, 1773.*

Rev. Sir,

I FIND much reason to praise GOD who loads me with his benefits. I find that prosperity and adversity are much the same to me: my soul being not overmuch grieved at the one; nor lifted up by the other. Death of late seems at no great distance; but in this my will is swallowed up in the will of GOD, that I cannot chuse either life or death.

The week after Easter I was informed that a man in this town, whose name is *Charles Dean*, was thought to be near death; and as he was a very wicked man, I thought I would go and see him. Accordingly I went and spoke freely to him concerning the state of his soul. I had not said much before I observed the tears fall from his eyes. He told me, he believed he had the hardest heart of any man alive. I was very glad to hear this, and told him it was a blessing that he felt it to be so. On asking him if I should go to prayer, he did not seem willing; but I told him I should not be long, and so prayed and went away. Going again the Monday following, and finding him putting off repentance, in hopes of being better in health, I endeavoured to shew him Satan's device in this; and persuaded him to seek the Lord *now*. Accordingly he began from that time to seek in good earnest. The next night I went to see him again, and found that GOD had given him a broken heart. I then went to prayer with him, and left him for the present. The next morning I found he was not satisfied with what he had received, but wanted an entire change of heart. On Wednesday morning 28, his wife found peace to her soul, and is now very happy in the Lord. Seeing her sister stand by, I told her, we must not leave her behind. On this she began to weep. I then encouraged her to believe. She cried out, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief!

The



The next day *Dean* sending for me, I went, and found him in the pangs of the new-birth. Indeed he seized my hand in an agony of distress. I went to prayer, and he prayed with me for some time. I then stopped, and let him pray by himself. When he gave over I began again, and in less than half an hour his soul was set at liberty. When I went home, he sent for a man from his work to tell him what GOD had done for his soul. Thus he continued all that and the two following days, exhorting all to repent and seek that change of heart which GOD had given him. He also sent for the curate to give him the sacrament; but the curate thought he was not sensible: for he told him what a blessed change he had found. The curate said, it was a good thing; but yet would not give him the sacrament until he was more composed. I then persuaded my brother to go to see him. I believe it had a quite contrary effect on *his* mind; for he wept much when he was with him: and ever since, when he has talked about him, the tears stand in his eyes. Last night his joy was somewhat abated; but his peace was still the same: and he said if it was the will of GOD, he would rather depart and be with Christ; but yet was quite resigned to GOD's will. As to his wife and sister they grow happier and happier daily. Glory be to GOD for this great work!

H. B.

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 L E T T E R.

[From Mrs. C. M. to the Rev. J. Wesley.]

May 12, 1773.

Rev. Sir,

I FEEL that faith and love which overcometh the world, and that peace which passeth all understanding. I find that Jesus has the ruling power in my breast, and that he has subdued all things under him, and governs every passion. The flame of divine love, in general, consumes all before it. I am also passive in the hand of GOD, and willing

willing to be disposed of as seemeth him good. I find such zeal for his cause, and such love to souls, as makes me love, pity, weep and pray for them. In short, I find a heaven upon earth! And yet I find I come short in all things; and therefore am sunk into nothing before Him, who has thought fit to call such a worm as me, to be a partaker of the heavenly inheritance!

As you seem desirous, Sir, to have a more particular account of the Lord's dealings with me from the beginning, I shall give you a short sketch of the same.

In May 1770, the Lord shewed me that I was a sinner by nature and practice; and that if I did not repent, I should perish for ever. I then attended the preaching constantly, and in a short time joined the society. From that time, till the 28th of June, my convictions increased. Being then in the deepest distress, I retired, full of shame and confusion. I thought to pray; but could not. I then ran to a book, called, *The Golden Key that opens hidden treasure*; and found a chapter suitable to my state. Presently after, I found the burden of sin fall off, and was enabled to cry out with *Thomas*, My Lord and my GOD! But I had not the abiding witness of his spirit, till three weeks after, when the Lord shined on my soul and left me without a doubt. In a very little time he shewed me that I was prone to backslide from him, and that the remains of sin and unbelief were the cause thereof. But how to get rid of them I knew not. On this I asked Mr. S. who told me, it was the gift of GOD. Then thought I, if this is the case, I will give GOD no rest until he gives it to me.

One morning, about the latter end of September, I went to the Lord, and pleaded the death and sufferings of his Son, and also my right to the blessings purchased by him. I had not been long before him, till my soul was transported as if it was going to leave the body. On this I cried out, Lord, what art thou about to do with me! Just then the following words came with power to my mind, Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation! Then was my soul set at full liberty, and disengaged from every needless care and inordinate desire. At the



same time I found it quite easy to do all that my heavenly Father required of me: and I had no doubt of my being sealed to the day of eternal redemption. In this confidence and full liberty of heart I still continue to this day. But as I am still weak and ignorant, I stand in need of every assistance; and therefore, dear Sir, I must beg (with your advice) an interest in your prayers; which will be gratefully acknowledged by

Your friend and servant,

C. M.

*Some Account of the Death of Mr. JOHN TREGELLAS, of  
St. Agnes, in Cornwall.*

**W**HEN he was about fifteen years of age, he caught a violent cold by sleeping on the grass. This so affected his health, that it was thought he would not recover; but proper means being used, he was in a great measure restored. He had at that time little or no concern for his salvation. When he was about seventeen, he was deeply awakened to a sense of his lost condition, and never rested till he had a clear manifestation of pardon. From that time he was an exemplary follower of his Redeemer; striving to keep a conscience void of offence towards GOD and man. He was but just entered upon his twenty-first year when he again caught a violent cold, which alarmed all who had any regard for him; yet he was not apprehensive of his danger; but used to say, "In a few days I shall be as well as ever." One of his friends answering, Suppose you should not recover, are you resigned? he replied, with great cheerfulness, "I think I cannot be unresigned to the will of GOD, be it whatever it may." When he was advised to take the advice of a physician, he answered, "I have no desire to live, but for the sake of one person whom I love above all the world; yet if the Lord is pleased to remove me, I shall be enabled to resign all that is dear to me." When one asked him if death appeared terrible? he

he answered, "No; though I do not enjoy that lively exercise of faith which I desire. Nevertheless I can give myself into the hands of GOD, and trust him for all I want." As his weakness increased, his graces were more conspicuous; for his patience, meekness, and humility excited the admiration of all who saw him.

After he was confined to his bed, he gave up all hopes of recovering, and made a full surrender of every thing below the sun. His soul was now all life and vigour. He seemed on the borders of heaven, and longed to depart and be with Christ. Yet he would frequently check his ardent desire, and say, "I want more patience to wait the Lord's time." Instead of complaining, he used frequently to say, "I bless GOD that I am about to be taken home, without any thing grievous to be borne." He talked of death with the greatest pleasure, and wondered that his emaciated body should so long keep him a prisoner below.

At seeing his friends weep, he said, "Let us rejoice the little time we have to spend together: and though we shall be separated for a season, we shall soon meet to part no more!" When any asked how he did, he answered, "I am happy!" or, "I am just got home!" or, "I am weak in body; but comfortable in my mind! O how precious is Jesus! I did not know that so much of heaven could be experienced on this side the grave."

At one time, being almost strangled by a fit of coughing, and seeing his friends much affected, as soon as he could speak, he said, "The will of GOD be done! That is best! Do not weep; for you never see me weep! I am not suffering much! I could suffer much more!" He then exhorted all who were with him to make sure of heaven.

To an acquaintance at a distance he sent the following message, "You must prepare to meet the Lord. If you do not alter your present course of life, you are undone for ever!"

He expressed a great satisfaction in seeing the children of GOD. "O, said he, how do I love those who love GOD, though I have not seen some of them before!" When his friends repeated any portions of GOD's word, he



he seemed to lay hold upon them all by faith, and then would express the peace and comfort they brought to his soul. He used to repeat the text he chose for his funeral, with inexpressible pleasure, "The redeemed of the Lord shall return to Zion with singing," &c.

When one asked him, What if the Lord should make you an example of patience, and leave you longer for a pattern to those round about you, could you be willing? he answered, "Yes: I think I am willing for the Lord to do with me as he pleases, so I may be kept from dishonouring him." He was always thankful for the least kind office that was done him, and expressed much concern lest he should weary his friends. When one said, I have reason to bless GOD that I have seen such an example of piety, both living and dying, he answered, "I would not have my friends think too highly of me, nor speak too much about me when I am gone." After taking a cordial, he said, "I have not vinegar and gall given me, as my blessed Master had."

The day before he died, the breaking of a blood vessel almost suffocating him, he seemed as in an agony; but as soon as he could speak, he said, "I am suffering a great deal!" On being asked, Are you happy? He answered, "Yes." A friend coming to his bed-side asked how he was? He answered, "Happy! happy! *John*," said he, "will you make my coffin?" He answered, Yes. "Well, said he, and will it not give you much pleasure to work upon it, now you know I am going safe to glory."

The evening before he died the Doctor was with him, to whom he said, "What do you think of me now?" The Doctor answered, You will not be many hours here. He then smiled, and invited the Doctor to stay and see him die. But though the Doctor went away, he told me after, that what he had seen and heard had confirmed him in one point wherein he had been wavering, viz. Whether a person could in this life, be wholly delivered from the fear of death?

The night he died he advised some of his friends to go home, lest their sitting up should injure their health; saying,

ing, "It appears as if I should not die to-night, seeing one symptom has not taken place which the Doctor expected about ten o'clock." However, about one o'clock in the morning he turned over, as if going to sleep; and at four his spirit returned to GOD, April 28, 1784.

JOSEPH TAYLOR.

Gretton, April 2, 1785.

## Poetry.

### THE WISH.

**N**OR let a wish for earth remain,  
 Nor let me grovel here below,  
 When heav'nly honours I may gain,  
 When joys immortal I may know;  
 When freed from woe, and endless pain,  
 My soul in heav'n with Christ may reign!

Nor earth, nor sense, nor sin, shall find  
 A resting-place within my soul;  
 All, all for Jesus is resign'd:  
 O! come, my Lord, possess me whole!  
 My soul, my body's pow'rs possess,  
 And sanctify me through thy grace!

I long for this, for this I pray,  
 To know that perfect love of thine,  
 When sin shall all be done away,  
 When in thine image I shall shine,

When



When I shall feel continual peace,  
And all the fruits of righteousness!

Ah! come, and move in me, and live,  
And triumph o'er my willing breast;  
I would thy fulness now receive;  
I would partake thy people's rest;  
Thine utmost goodness fain would prove,  
And antedate the joys above.

Jesus, my Saviour, now fulfil  
Thy great design, thy grand decrees;  
In me be done thy righteous will,  
Accomplish'd all thy promises;  
Let grace renew and cleanse my heart;  
The mind which was in thee, impart.

Not only, Lord, my sins forgive,  
But spread thy sanctifying leav'n;  
O! make me meet with GOD to live,  
With all the perfect saints in heav'n;  
With them, before thy glorious throne  
May I adore, and cast my crown!

Then will I praise thine holy name,  
And bless thee for thy wondrous grace;  
Thy matchless glories then proclaim;  
Thy wisdom, pow'r, and faithfulness;  
I'll emulate the hosts above,  
And sing the riches of thy love.

From my own works now bid me cease,  
And own the strength of thy right-hand;  
Now perfect me in holiness,  
Let all submit to love's command;  
Subject me to thy wise control;  
New model thou my ransom'd soul.

Father

Father, my wand'ring footsteps guide,  
 Make me with Christ in spirit one,  
 And call thy favourite to thy side,  
 And seat me on thy glorious throne,  
 And let me there securely dwell  
 Beyond the reach of death and hell.

To GOD, who reigns enthron'd on high,  
 The Father of eternal days,  
 To Christ, th' incarnate Majesty,  
 And to the Spirit of his grace,  
 Be honour, praise, and glory giv'n,  
 By sons of earth, and hosts of heav'n.

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### On ETERNITY.

**W**HAT is Eternity? Can ought  
 Point its duration to the thought?  
 Tell every beam the sun emits,  
 When in sublimest noon he sits;  
 Tell every light-wing'd thought that strays  
 Within its ample round of rays?  
 Tell all the leaves and all the buds,  
 That crown the gardens and the woods;  
 Tell all the spires of grass, the meads  
 Produce, when spring propitious leads  
 The new-born year; tell all the drops  
 The night, upon their bended tops,  
 Sheds in soft silence to display  
 Their beauties with the rising day;  
 Tell all the sands the ocean leaves,  
 Tell all its changes, all its waves;  
 Or tell with more laborious pains  
 The drops its mighty mass contains;  
 Be this astonishing account  
 Augmented with the full amount.



Of all the drops the clouds have shed,  
 Where'er their watery fleeces spread,  
 Through all time's long-continued tour,  
 From *Adam* to the present hour—  
 Still short the sum; nor can it vie  
 With the more numerous years that lie  
 Imbosom'd in *Eternity*. }

Was there a belt that could contain  
 In its vast orb the earth and main;  
 With figures was it cluster'd o'er,  
 Without one cypher in the score;  
 And could your labouring thought assign  
 The total of the crowded line:  
 How scant th' amount? Th' attempt how vain,  
 To reach duration's endless chain?  
 For when as many years are run,  
 Unbounded age is but begun.

Then hear, O man! with awe divine,  
 For this *Eternity* is thine.

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*An Epitaph on Mr. PETER JACO.*

**F**ISHER of men,\* ordain'd by Christ alone,  
 Immortal souls he for his Saviour won;  
 With loving faith, and calmly fervent zeal,  
 Perform'd and suffer'd the Redeemer's will;  
 Unmov'd in all the storms of life remain'd,  
 And in the good, old ship the haven gain'd.

\* Mr. *Jaco* was brought up to the fishing business. Here then we have another *Peter* the fisherman, forsaking his nets, following Christ, and becoming a fisher of men.

THE

## Arminian Magazine,

For JULY 1790.



## PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED.

[BY JOHN WESLEY, M. A.]

[Continued from page 268.]

XXII. **B**UT to be a little more particular. How can you possibly reconcile reprobation with those scriptures that declare the justice of GOD? To cite one for all.

Ezek. xviii. 2. &c. *What mean ye, that ye use this proverb; The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so the soul of the son is mine; (and however I may temporally visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, yet this visitation extends no further, but) the soul that sinneth, it shall die, for its own sin, and not another's. But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right—he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD. If he beget a son, that is a robber—shall he then live? He shall not live; he shall surely die—Yet say ye, why, doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? (Temporally he doth, as in the case of Achan, Korah, and a thousand others: but not eternally.) When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live. The soul that*



*sinneſt it ſhall die (ſhall die the ſecond death.) The ſon ſhall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither ſhall the father bear the iniquity of the ſon. The righteousneſs of the righteous ſhall be upon him, and the wickedneſs of the wicked ſhall be upon him. Yet ye ſay, the way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O Iſrael! Is not my way equal? (equitable, juſt) Are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousneſs, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done, ſhall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs, that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive.—Therefore, I will judge you, O houſe of Iſrael! every one according to his ways, ſaith the Lord GOD: Repent, and turn yourſelves from all your tranſgreſſions: ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruin.*

Throughout this whole paſſage GOD is pleaſed to appeal to man himſelf, touching the juſtice of his proceedings. And well might he appeal to our own conſcience, according to the account of them which is here given: but it is an account which all the art of man will never reconcile with unconditional reprobation:

XXIII. Do you think it will cut the knot to ſay, “Why, “if GOD might juſtly have paſt by all men (ſpeak out, if “GOD might *juſtly* have *reprobated* all men, for it comes “to the ſame point) then he may juſtly paſs by ſome. But “GOD might *juſtly* have paſſed by all men.” Are you ſure he might? Where is it written? I cannot find it in the word of GOD. Therefore, I reject it as a bold, precarious aſſertion, utterly unsupported by holy ſcripture.

If you ſay, “But you know in your own conſcience, “GOD might *juſtly* have paſſed by you:” I deny it. That GOD might *juſtly*, for my unfaithfulneſs to his grace, have *given me up* long ago, I grant: but this conſeſſion ſuppoſes me to have had that grace, which you ſay a reprobate never had.

But beſides, in making this ſuppoſition, of what GOD might have juſtly done, you ſuppoſe his juſtice might have been ſeparate from his other attributes, from his mercy in particular.

particular. But this never was, nor ever will be : nor indeed is it possible it should. All his attributes are inseparably joined : they cannot be divided, no, not for a moment. Therefore, this whole argument stands, not only on an unscriptural, but on an absurd, impossible supposition.

XXIV. Do you say, "Nay, but it is just for GOD to pass by whom he will, because of his sovereignty : for he saith himself, *may I not do what I will with my own ?* And, *hath not the potter power over his own clay ?*" I answer, the former of these sentences stands in the conclusion of that parable, Mat. 20. wherein our Lord reproves the Jews for murmuring at GOD's giving the same reward to the gentiles as to them. To one of these murmurers it is that GOD says, *Friend, I do thee no wrong ; take that thine is, and go thy way : I will give unto this last even as unto thee.* Then follows, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own ? Is thine eye evil, because I am good ?* As if he had said, "May I not give my own kingdom to whom I please ?" "Art thou angry, because I am merciful ?" It is then undeniably clear, that GOD does not here assert a right of reprobating any man. Here is nothing spoken of reprobation, bad or good. Here is no kind of reference thereto. This text therefore has nothing to do with the conclusion it was brought to prove.

XXV. But you add, *hath not the potter power over his own clay ?* Let us consider the context of these words also. They are found in the ninth chapter of the epistle to the *Romans* ; an epistle, the general scope and intent of which is, to publish the eternal, unchangeable *πρόθεσις*, purpose or decree of GOD, *He that believeth, shall be saved ; he that believeth not, shall be damned.* The justice of GOD in condemning those that believed not, and the necessity of believing in order to salvation, the apostle proves at large in the three first chapters, which he confirms in the fourth by the example of *Abraham*. In the former part of the fifth, and in the sixth chapter, he describes the happiness and holiness of true believers. (The latter part of the fifth is a digression concerning the extent of the benefits flowing from the death of Christ.)



Christ.) In the seventh, he shews in what sense believers in Christ are delivered from the law: and describes the miserable bondage of those who are still under the law; that is, who are truly convinced of sin, but not able to conquer it. In the eighth, he again describes the happy liberty of those who truly believe in Christ; and encourages them to suffer for the faith, as by other considerations, so by this in particular, *we know that all things work together for good to them that love GOD*, ver. 28. *to them that are called* (by the preaching of his word) *according to his purpose*, or decree; unalterably fixt from eternity: *he that believeth, shall be saved*. For whom he did foreknow, as believing, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, by his word (so that term is usually taken in St. Paul's epistles;) and whom he called, them he also justified (the word is here taken in its widest sense, as including sanctification also;) and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Thence to the end of the chapter, he strongly encourages all those, who had the love of GOD shed abroad in their hearts, to have a good hope, that no sufferings should ever be able to separate them from the love of GOD which is in Christ Jesus.

XXVI. But as the apostle was aware, how deeply the Jews were offended at the whole tenor of his doctrine, and more especially at his asserting, 1. That the Jews themselves could not be saved without believing in Jesus; and 2. That the heathens by believing in him, might partake of the same salvation: he spends the whole ninth chapter upon them: wherein, 1. He declares the tender love he had for them, ver, 1—3. 2. Allows the great national privileges they enjoyed above any people under heaven, ver. 4, 5. 3. Answers their grand objection to his doctrine, taken from the justice of GOD to their fathers, ver. 6—13. 4. Removes another objection, taken from the justice of GOD, interweaving all along strong reproofs to the Jews, for priding themselves on those privileges, which were owing meerly to the good-pleasure of GOD, not to their fathers' goodness, any more than their own,

ver.

ver. 14—23. 5. Resumes and proves by scripture his former assertion, that many Jews would be lost, and many heathens saved, ver. 24—29. And, lastly, sums up the general drift of this chapter, and indeed of the whole epistle. *What shall we say then?* What is the conclusion from the whole, the sum of all which has been spoken? Why, that many Gentiles already partake of the great salvation, and many Jews fall short of it. *Wherefore?* Because they would not receive it by faith. And whosoever believeth not, cannot be saved: whereas, *whosoever believeth in Christ*, whether Jew or Gentile, *shall not be ashamed*, ver. 30—33.

XXVII. Those words, *hath not the potter power over his own clay?* are part of St. Paul's answer to that objection, that it was unjust for GOD to shew that mercy to the Gentiles, which he withheld from his own people. This he first simply denies, saying, *GOD forbid!* And then observes, that, according to his own words to Moses, GOD has a right to fix the terms on which he will shew mercy, which neither the will nor the power of man can alter, ver. 15, 16: and to withdraw his mercy from them, who, like Pharaoh, will not comply with those terms, ver. 17. And that accordingly, *he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy*, namely, those that truly believe: *and whom he will*; namely, obstinate unbelievers, he suffers to be *hardened*.

XXVIII. But *why then*, say the objectors, *doth he find fault* with those that are hardened? *For who hath resisted his will?* ver. 19. To this insolent misconstruction of what he had said, the apostle first gives a severe rebuke, and then adds, *shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?* Why hast thou made me capable of salvation, only on those terms? None indeed *hath resisted* this will of GOD: *he that believeth not, shall be damned*. But is this any ground for arraigning his justice? *Hath not* the great *potter power over his own clay*; *to make*, or appoint one sort of *vessels*, namely, believers, *to honour*, and the others *unto dishonour*? Hath he not a right to distribute eternal honour and dishonour, on whatever terms he pleases? Especially, considering the goodness and patience he shews,  
even



even towards them that believe not: considering that when they have provoked him to *shew his wrath, and to make the power of his vengeance known, yet he endures with much long-suffering, even those vessels of wrath, who had before fitted themselves to destruction.* There is then no more room to reply against GOD, for making his vengeance known on those vessels of wrath, than for *making known his glorious love on the vessels of mercy whom he had before by faith prepared for glory: even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.*

XXIX. I have spoke more largely than I designed, in order to shew, that neither our Lord in the above mentioned parable, nor St. Paul, in these words, had any view to GOD's sovereign power, as the ground of unconditional reprobation. And beware that you go no further therein, than you are authorized by them. Take care, whenever you speak of these high things, to *speak as the oracles of GOD.* And if so, you will never speak of the sovereignty of GOD, but in conjunction with his other attributes. For the scripture no where speaks of this single attribute, as separate from the rest: much less does it any where speak of the sovereignty of GOD, as singly disposing the eternal states of men. No, no: in this awful work, GOD proceeds according to the known rules of his justice and mercy.

XXX. But never assign his sovereignty as the cause why any man is punished with everlasting destruction. Now then, are you not quite out of the way? You are not in the way which GOD hath revealed. You are putting eternal happiness and misery, on an unscriptural, and a very dreadful footing. Make the case your own. Here are you, a sinner, convinced that you deserve the damnation of hell: sorrow, therefore, and fear have filled your heart. And how shall you be comforted? By the promises of GOD; but perhaps you have no part therein; for they belong only to the elect. By the consideration of his love and tender mercy: but what are these to you, if you are a reprobate? GOD does not love you at all: you, like Esau, he hath hated even from eternity. What ground

then

then can you have for the least shadow of hope? Why, it is possible (that is all) that GOD's sovereign will may be on your side: *possibly*, GOD may save you, because he will! O poor encouragement to despairing sinners! I fear *faith rarely cometh by hearing* this!

XXXI. The sovereignty of GOD is then never to be brought to supercede his justice. And this is the present objection against unconditional reprobation (the plain consequence of unconditional election;) it flatly contradicts, indeed utterly overthrows, the scripture-account of the justice of GOD. This has been proved in general already; let us now weigh a few particulars. And 1. The scripture describes GOD as the judge of the earth. But how shall GOD in justice judge the world? (O consider this, as in the presence of GOD, with reverence and godly fear!) How shall GOD in justice judge the world, if there be any decree of reprobation? On this supposition, what should those on the left-hand be condemned for? For their having done evil? They could not help it. There never was a time, when they could have helped it. GOD, you say, *of old ordained them to this condemnation*. And *who hath resisted his will?* He *sold* them; you say, *to work wickedness*, even from their mother's womb. He *gave them up to a reprobate mind*, or ever they *hung upon their mother's breast*. Shall he then condemn them for what they could not help? Shall the just, the Holy One of Israel, adjudge millions of men to everlasting pain, because their blood moved in their veins? Nay, this they might have helped by putting an end to their own lives. But could they even thus have escaped from sin? Not without that grace which you suppose GOD had absolutely determined never to give them. And yet you suppose him to send them into eternal fire for not escaping from sin! That is, in plain terms, for not having that grace, which GOD had decreed they should never have! O strange justice! What a picture do you draw of the Judge of all the earth?

XXXII. Are they not rather condemned, for not doing good, according to those solemn words of the great Judge,  
*Depart.*



*Depart, ye cursed—For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they answer—*But how much better an answer do you put into their mouths? Upon *your* supposition, might they not say (O consider it well, in meekness and fear!) Lord, we might have done the outward work: but thou knowest, it would but have increased our damnation. We might have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, and covered the naked with a garment. But all these works without thy *special grace*, which we never had, nor possibly could have, (seeing thou hast eternally decreed to withhold it from us) would only have been *splendid sins*. They would only have heated the furnace of hell seven times hotter than before. Upon *your* supposition, might they not say, “Righteous art thou, “ O Lord, yet let us plead with thee. O why dost thou “ condemn us for not doing good? Was it possible for us “ to do any thing well? Did we ever abuse the power of do- “ ing good? We never received it, and that thou knowest. “ Wilt thou, the Holy One, the Just, condemn us for not doing “ what we never had the power to do? Wilt thou condemn “ us for not casting down the stars from heaven; for not hold- “ ing the winds in our fist? Why, it was as possible for us to “ do this, as to do any work acceptable in thy sight! O “ Lord, correct us, but with judgment! and before thou “ plungest us into everlasting fire, let us know how it was “ ever possible for us to escape the damnation of hell.”

XXXIII. Or how could they have escaped (suppose you assign that, as the cause of their condemnation) from inward sin; from evil desires; from unholy tempers and vile affections? Were they ever able to deliver their own souls; to rescue themselves from this inward hell? If so, their not doing it might justly be laid to their charge, and would leave them without excuse. But it was not so: they never were able to deliver their own souls: they never had power to rescue themselves from the hands of these bosom-enemies. This talent was never put into their hands. How then can they

they be condemned for hiding it in the earth; for non-improvement of what they never had? Who is able to purify a corrupt heart? to *bring a clean thing out of an unclean*? Is man, mere man, sufficient for this? No certainly: GOD alone. To him only can the polluted of heart say, *Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* But what if he answer, "I will not, because I will not: be thou unclean still." Will GOD doom that man to the bottomless pit because of that uncleanness, which he *could* not save himself from, and which GOD could have saved him from, but would not? Verily, were an earthly king to execute such justice as this upon his helpless subjects, it might well be expected that the vengeance of the Lord would soon sweep him from the face of the earth.

[Continued at page 365.]

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## S E R M O N XIX.

On 1 CORINTHIANS xiii. 1, 2, 3.

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*

*And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.*

*And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*

WE know, *All scripture is given by inspiration of GOD*, and is therefore true and right concerning all things. But we know likewise, that there are some scriptures which more immediately commend themselves to every man's conscience. In this rank we may place the pas-



sage before us : there are scarce any that object to it. On the contrary, the generality of men very readily appeal to it. Nothing is more common than to find even those who deny the authority of the holy scriptures, yet affirming, " This is my religion : that which is described in the thirteenth chapter of the Corinthians." Nay, even a Jew, Dr. *Nunes*, a *Spanish* physician, then settled at *Savannah*, in *Georgia*, used to say, with great earnestness, " That *Paul of Tarsus* was one of the finest writers I have ever read. I wish the thirteenth chapter of his first letter to the *Corinthians*, were wrote in letters of gold. And I wish every Jew were to carry it with him wherever he went." He judged, (and herein he certainly judged right) that this single chapter contained the whole of true religion. It contains *whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely : if there be any virtue, if there be any praise*, it is all contained in this.

In order to see this in the clearest light, we may consider,

First, What the charity here spoken of, is :

Secondly, What those things are, which are usually put in the place of it. We may then,

Thirdly, Observe, that neither any of them, nor all of them put together, can supply the want of it.

I. 1. We are, first, to consider, What this charity is ? what is the nature, and what are the properties of it ?

St. *Paul's* word is *Αγαπη*, exactly answering to the plain *English* word, *love*. And accordingly it is so rendered in all the old translations of the Bible. So it stood in *William Tindal's* Bible, which I suppose was the first *English* translation of the whole Bible. So it was also in the Bible published in *London*, by the authority of king *Henry* the eighth ; so it was likewise in all the editions of the Bible that were successively published in *England* during the reign of king *Edward* the sixth, queen *Elizabeth*, and king *James* the first. Nay, so it is found in the Bibles of king *Charles* the first's reign : I believe to the period of it. The first Bibles I have seen wherein the word was changed, were those printed by

Roger

*Roger Daniel*, and *John Field*, printers to the Parliament, in the year 1649. Hence it appears, that the alteration was made during the reign of the Long-Parliament: then it was that the Latin word *charity* was put in the place of the plain *English* word *love*. It was an unhappy hour this alteration was made; the ill effects of it remain to this day: and these may be observed not only among the poor and illiterate: not only thousands of common men and women, no more understand the word *charity*, than they do the original *Greek*; but the same miserable mistake has diffused itself among men of education and learning. Thousands of these also are misled thereby, and imagine that the *charity* treated of in this chapter refers chiefly, if not wholly, to outward actions, and means little more than almsgiving. I have heard many sermons preached upon this chapter: particularly before the university of *Oxford*. And I never heard more than one, wherein the meaning of it was not totally misrepresented. But had the old and proper word, *love*, been retained, there would have been no room for misrepresentation.

2. But what kind of love is that whereof the apostle is speaking throughout the chapter? Many persons of eminent learning and piety apprehend that it is the love of GOD. But from reading the whole chapter numberless times, and considering it in every light, I am thoroughly persuaded that what *St. Paul* is here directly speaking of, is the love of our neighbour. I believe whoever carefully weighs the whole tenor of his discourse, will be fully convinced of this. But it must be allowed to be such a love of our neighbour, as can only spring from the love of GOD. And whence does this love of GOD flow? Only from that faith which is of the operation of GOD: which whoever has, has a direct evidence, that *GOD was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself*. When this is particularly applied to his heart, so that he can say, with humble boldness, *The life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of GOD, who loved me, and gave himself for me*: then, and not till then, *the love of GOD is shed abroad in his heart*. And this love sweetly constrains him to love every child of man with the love which is here  
spoken



spoken of: not with a love of esteem or of complaisance; for this can have no place, with regard to those, who are, (if not his personal enemies, yet) enemies to GOD and their own souls; but with a love of benevolence, of tender goodwill to all the souls that GOD has made.

3. But it may be asked, "If there be no true love of our neighbours, but that which springs from the love of GOD; and if the love of GOD flows from no other fountain than faith in the son of GOD: does it not follow that the whole heathen world is excluded from all possibility of salvation? Seeing they are cut off from faith: for faith cometh by hearing. And how shall they hear without a preacher?" I answer, St. *Paul's* words, spoken on another occasion, are applicable to this, *What the law speaketh, it speaketh to them that are under the law.* Accordingly that sentence, *He that believeth not, shall be damned,* is spoken of them to whom the gospel is preached. Others it does not concern, and we are not required to determine any thing touching their final state. How it will please GOD, the judge of all, to deal with *them*, we may leave to GOD himself. Only this we know, that he is not the GOD of the Christians only, but the GOD of the heathens also: that he is *rich in mercy to all that call upon him, according to the light they have: and that in every nation, he that feareth GOD and worketh righteousness is accepted of him.*

4. But to return. This is the nature of that love, whereof the apostle is here speaking. But what are the properties of it, the fruits which are inseparable from it? The apostle reckons up many of these; but the principal of them are these.

First, *Love is not puffed up.* As is the measure of love, so is the measure of humility. Nothing humbles the soul so deeply as love; it casts out all "high conceits, engendering pride," all arrogance and over-weaning, makes us little, and poor, and base, and vile in our own eyes. It abases us both before GOD and man; makes us willing to be the least of all, and the servants of all, and teaches us to

to say, "a mote in the sun-beam is little, but I am infinitely less in the presence of GOD."

5. Secondly, *Love is not provoked*. Our present *English* translation renders it, *is not easily provoked*. But how did the word *easily* come in? There is not a tittle of it in the text: the words of the apostle are simply these, *οὐ παροξυνεται*. Is it not probable, it was inserted by the translators with a design to excuse St. Paul, for fear his practice should appear to contradict his doctrine? For we read *Acts* xv. ver. 36, and seq. *And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, let us go again and visit our brethren in every city, where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do. And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good, to take him with them who departed from the work. And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed for Cyprus: and Paul chose Silas, and departed; being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of GOD. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.*

6. Would not any one think, on reading these words, that they were both equally sharp? That Paul was just as hot as Barnabas, and as much wanting in love as he? But the text says no such thing, as will be plain, if we consider first the occasion. When St. Paul proposed, that they should again visit the brethren in every city, where they had preached the word, so far they were agreed. And Barnabas determined to take with him John, because he was his sister's son, without receiving or asking St. Paul's advice. But Paul thought not good to take him with them who had departed from them from Pamphylia (either through sloth or cowardice) and went not with them to the work. And undoubtedly he thought right: he had reason on his side. The following words are *Ἐγένετο ἐν παροξυσμῷ*; literally, *And there was a fit of anger*. It does not say, in St. Paul, probably it was in Barnabas alone, who thus supplied the want of reason with passion: so they departed asunder. And Barnabas resolved to have his own way, did as his nephew had done



done before, departed from the work, took Mark with him, and sailed to Cyprus. But Paul went on in his work, being recommended by the brethren, to the grace of GOD; (which Barnabas seems not to have staid for,) and he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. From the whole account, it does not appear that St. Paul was in any fault: that he either felt any temper, or spoke any word, contrary to the law of love. Therefore not being in any fault, he does not need any excuse.

7. Certainly he who is full of love is gentle towards all men. He in meekness instructs those that oppose themselves, that oppose what he loves the most, even the truth of GOD, or that holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord; not knowing but GOD peradventure may bring them to the knowledge of the truth. However provoked, he does not return evil for evil, or railing for railing. Yea, he blesses those that curse him, and does good to them that despitefully use him and persecute him. He is not overcome of evil, but always overcomes evil with good.

8. Thirdly, Love is long-suffering. It endures not a few affronts, reproaches, injuries: but all things which GOD is pleased to permit either men or devils to inflict. It arms the soul with inviolable patience: not harsh, stoical patience, but yielding as the air, which making no resistance to the stroke, receives no harm thereby. The lover of mankind remembers him who suffered for us, leaving us an example that we might tread in his steps. Accordingly, if his enemy hunger, he feeds him; if he thirst, he gives him drink; and by so doing, he heaps coals of fire, of melting love, upon his head. And many waters cannot quench this love; neither can even the floods of ingratitude drown it.

II. 1. We are, secondly, to enquire, what those things are, which it is commonly supposed will supply the place of love. And the first of these is eloquence: a faculty of talking well, particularly on religious subjects. Men are generally inclined to think well of one that talks well. If he speaks properly and fluently of GOD, and the things of GOD, who can doubt of his being in GOD's favour?

And

And it is very natural for him, to think well of himself, to have as favourable an opinion of himself as others have.

2. But men of reflection are not satisfied with this: they are not content with a flood of words. They prefer thinking before talking, and judge, one that knows much is far preferable to one that talks much. And it is certain, knowledge is an excellent gift of GOD; particularly knowledge of the holy scriptures, in which are contained all the depths of divine knowledge and wisdom. Hence it is generally thought that a man of much knowledge, knowledge of scripture in particular, must not only be in the favour of GOD, but likewise enjoy a high degree of it.

3. But men of deeper reflection are apt to say, "I lay no stress upon any other knowledge, but the knowledge of GOD by faith. Faith is the only knowledge, which in the sight of GOD is of great price. *We are saved by faith; by faith alone: this is the one thing needful.* He that believeth, and he alone, shall be saved everlastingly." There is much truth in this: it is unquestionably true, that *we are saved by faith: consequently, that he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned.*

4. But some men will say, with the apostle *James, shew me thy faith without thy works, (if thou canst; but indeed it is impossible,) and I will shew thee my faith by my works.* And many are hereby induced to think, that good works, works of piety and mercy, are of far more consequence than faith itself, and will supply the want of every other qualification for heaven. Indeed this seems to be the general sentiment, not only of the members of the church of *Rome*, but of protestants also; not of the giddy and thoughtless, but the serious members of the church of *England*.

5. And this cannot be denied, our Lord himself hath said, *Ye shall know them by their fruits: by their works ye know them that believe, and them that believe not.* But yet it may be doubted, whether there is not a surer proof of the sincerity of our faith, than even our works: that is, our willingly suffering for righteousness' sake: especially, if after suffering reproach, and pain, and loss of friends and  
substance,



substance, a man gives up life itself, yea, by a shameful and painful death, by giving his body to be burned, rather than he would give up faith and a good conscience, by neglecting his known duty.

6. It is proper to observe here, first, What a beautiful gradation there is, each rising above the other, in the enumeration of those several things, which some or other of those that are called christians, and are usually accounted so, really believe, will supply the absence of love. *St. Paul* begins at the lowest point; *talking well*, and advances step by step, every one rising higher than the preceding, till he comes to the highest of all. A step above eloquence is knowledge: faith is a step above this. Good-works are a step above that faith. And even above this, is suffering for righteousness' sake. Nothing is higher than this, but christian love: the love of our neighbour flowing from the love of GOD.

7. It may be proper to observe, secondly, That whatever passes for religion in any part of the christian world, (whether it be a part of religion, or no part at all, but either folly, superstition, or wickedness,) may with very little difficulty be reduced to one or other of these heads. Every thing which is supposed to be religion, either by Protestants or Romanists, and is not, is contained under one or other of these five particulars. Make trial, as often as you please, with any thing that is called religion, but improperly so called, and you will find the rule to hold without any exception.

III. 1. I am now in the third place to demonstrate, to all who have ears to hear, who do not harden themselves against conviction, that neither any one of these five qualifications, nor all of them together, will avail any thing before GOD, without the love above described.

In order to do this in the clearest manner, we may consider them one by one. And first, *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels*; with an eloquence such as never was found in man, concerning the nature, attributes and works of GOD, whether of creation or providence: though

I were

I were not herein a whit behind the chief of the apostles, preaching like *St. Peter*, and praying like *St. John*: yet unless humble, gentle, patient love be the ruling temper of my soul, I *am* no better in the judgment of GOD, *than sounding brass, or a rumbling cymbal*. The highest eloquence therefore either in private conversation, or in public ministrations; the brightest talents either for preaching or prayer, if they were not joined with humble, meek, and patient resignation, might sink me the deeper into hell, but will not bring me one step nearer heaven.

2. A plain instance may illustrate this. I knew a young man between fifty and sixty years ago, who, during the course of several years, never endeavoured to convince any one of a religious truth, but he *was* convinced: and he never endeavoured to persuade any one to engage in a religious practice, but he was persuaded; what then? All that power of convincing speech, all that force of persuasion, if it was not joined with meekness and lowliness, with resignation and patient love, would no more qualify him for the fruition of GOD, than a clear voice, or a fine complexion. Nay, it would rather procure him a hotter place in everlasting burnings.

3. Secondly, *though I had the gift of prophecy*, of foretelling those future events which no creature can foresee; and *though I understand all the mysteries* of nature, of Providence, and of the word of GOD; and all *knowledge* of things divine or human, that any mortal ever attained to: though I could explain the most mysterious passages of *Daniel*, of *Ezekiel*, and the *Revelation*: yet if I have not humility, gentleness and resignation, I *am nothing* in the sight of GOD.

A little before the conclusion of the late war in *Flanders*, one who came from thence, gave us a very strange relation. I knew not what judgment to form of this; but waited till *John Haim* should come over, of whose veracity I could no more doubt, than of his understanding. The account he gave was this. "*Jonathan Pyrah* was a member of our society in *Flanders*. I knew him some years, and knew him



to be a man of an unblameable character. One day he was summoned to appear before the board of general officers. One of them said, What is this which we hear of you? We hear you are turned prophet, and that you foretel the downfall of the bloody house of *Bourbon*, and the haughty house of *Austria*. We should be glad, if you were a real prophet, and if your prophecies came true. But what sign do you give, to convince us that you are so? and that your predictions will come to pass? He readily answered, "Gentlemen, I give you a sign. To-morrow at twelve o'clock, you shall have such a storm of thunder and lightning, as you never had before since you came into *Flanders*. I give you a second sign: as little as any of you expect any such thing, as little appearance of it as there is now, you shall have a general engagement with the *French* within three days. I give you a third sign: I shall be ordered to advance in the first line. If I am a false prophet, I shall be shot dead, at the very first discharge. But if I am a true prophet, I shall only receive a musket-ball in the calf of my left leg." At twelve the next day there was such thunder and lightning as they never had before in *Flanders*. On the third day, contrary to all expectation, was the general battle of *Fontenoy*. He was ordered to advance in the first line. And at the very first discharge, he did receive a musket-ball in the calf of his left leg.

4. And yet all this profited him nothing, either for temporal or eternal happiness. When the war was over, he returned to *England*; but the story was got before him: in consequence of which he was sent for by the countess of *St—s*, and several other persons of quality, who were desirous to receive so surprising an account from his own mouth. He could not bear such honour. It quite turned his brain. In a little time he ran stark mad: and so he continues to this day, living still, as I apprehend, on *Websey-Moor-side* within a few miles of *Leeds*.

5. And what would it profit a man to *have all knowledge*, even that which is infinitely preferable to all other, the knowledge of the holy scripture? I knew a young man, about  
twenty

twenty years ago, who was so thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, that if he was questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the Old, or any Greek word in the New Testament, he would tell, after a little pause, not only how often the one or the other occurred in the Bible, but also what it meant in every place. His name was \* *Thomas Walfsh*. Such a master of biblic knowledge I never saw before, and never expect to see again. Yet if with all his knowledge he had been void of love, if he had been proud, passionate or impatient, he and all his knowledge would have perished together, as sure as ever he was born.

6. *And though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains*—The faith which is able to do this, cannot be the fruit of vain imagination, a mere madman's dream, a system of opinions; but must be a real work of GOD. Otherwise it could not have such an effect. Yet if this faith does not work by love, if it does not produce universal holiness, if it does not bring forth lowliness, meekness and resignation, it will profit me nothing. This is as certain a truth as any that is delivered in the whole oracles of GOD. All faith that is, that ever was, or ever can be, separate from tender benevolence to every child of man, friend or foe, Christian, Jew, Heretic or Pagan; separate from gentleness to all men; separate from resignation in all events, and contentedness in all conditions: is not the faith of a Christian, and will stand us in no stead before the face of GOD.

7. Hear ye this, All you that are called Methodists. You of all men living are most concerned herein. You constantly speak of salvation by faith: and you are in the right for so doing. You maintain, one and all, that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law. And you cannot do otherwise, without giving up the Bible, and betraying your own souls. You insist upon it, that we are saved by faith; and undoubtedly so we are. But consider mean time, that let us have ever so much faith, and be our faith ever so strong, it will never save us from hell, unless

\* His journal, written by himself, is extant.



it now save us from all unholy tempers; from pride, passion, impatience; from all arrogance of spirit, all haughtiness and overbearing: from wrath, anger, bitterness: from discontent, murmuring, fretfulness, peevishness. We are of all men most inexcusable, if having been so frequently guarded against that strong delusion, we still, while we indulge any of these tempers, bless ourselves, and dream we are in the way to heaven!

8. Fourthly, *Although I give all my goods to feed the poor*, though I divide all my real, and all my personal estate into small portions, (so the original word properly signifies,) and diligently bestow it on those who, I have reason to believe, are the most proper objects: yet if I am proud, passionate, or discontented; if I give way to any of these tempers; whatever good I may do to others, I do none to my own soul. O how pitiable a case is this! Who would not grieve, that these beneficent men should lose all their labour! It is true, many of them have a reward in this world, if not before, yet after their death. They have costly and pompous funerals. They have marble monuments of the most exquisite workmanship. They have epitaphs, wrote in the most elegant strain, which extol their virtues to the skies. Perhaps they have yearly orations spoken over them, to transmit their memory to all generations. So have many founders of religious houses, of colleges, alms-houses, and most charitable institutions. And it is an allowed rule, that none can exceed in the praise of the founder of his house, college or hospital. But still what a poor reward is this! will it add to their comfort or to their misery, suppose (which must be the case, if they did not die in faith) that they are in the hands of the devil and his angels! What insults, what cutting reproaches would these things occasion, from their infernal companions! O that they were wise! that all those who are zealous of good works, would put them in their proper place! would not imagine, they can supply the want of holy tempers; but take care, that they may spring from them!

9. How exceeding strange must this sound in the ears of most of those who are, by the courtesy of their country, called christians! But stranger still is that assertion of the apostle, which comes in the last place: *Although I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.* Although, rather than deny the faith, rather than commit a known sin, or omit a known duty, I voluntarily submit to a cruel death, *deliver up my body to be burned*: yet, if I am under the power of pride, or anger, or fretfulness, *it profiteth me nothing.*

10. Perhaps this may be illustrated by an example. We have a remarkable account in the tracts of Dr. *Geddes* (a civilian) who was Envoy from queen *Ann* to the court of *Portugal*, in the latter end of her reign. He was present at one of those *auto de fes*, (acts of faith,) wherein the Roman inquisitors burn heretics alive. One of the persons who was then brought out for execution, having been confined in the dungeons of the inquisition, had not seen the sun for many years. It proved a bright, sun-shiny day. Looking up, he cried out in surprise, "O how can any one who sees that glorious luminary, worship any but the GOD that made it!" A friar standing by, ordered them to run an iron gag through his lips, that he might speak no more. Now what did that poor man feel within, when this order was executed? If he said in his heart, though he could not utter it with his lips, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do*, undoubtedly the angels of GOD were ready to carry his soul into Abraham's bosom. But if instead of this, he cherished the resentment in his heart, which he could not express with his tongue, although his body was consumed by the flames, I will not say his soul went to paradise.

11. The sum of all that has been observed, is this: Whatever I speak, whatever I know, whatever I believe, whatever I do, whatever I suffer: if I have not the faith that worketh by love, that produces love to GOD and all mankind, I am not in the narrow way which leadeth to life; but in the broad road that leadeth to destruction. In  
other



other words: whatever eloquence I have, whatever natural or supernatural knowledge; whatever faith I have received from GOD: whatever works I do, whether of piety or mercy: whatever sufferings I undergo for conscience' sake, even though I resist unto blood: all these things put together, however applauded of men, will avail nothing before GOD, unless I am meek and lowly in heart, and can say in all things, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

12. We conclude from the whole, (and it can never be too much inculcated, because all the world votes on the other side,) That true religion, in the very essence of it, is nothing short of *holy tempers*. Consequently all other religion, whatever name it bears, whether Pagan, Mahometan, Jewish or Christian: whether Popish or Protestant, Lutheran or Reformed; without these, is lighter than vanity itself.

13. Let every man therefore that has a soul to be saved, see that he secure this one point. With all his eloquence, his knowledge, his faith, works and sufferings, let him hold fast this *one thing needful*. He that through the power of faith, endureth to the end in humble, gentle, patient love; he and he alone shall, through the merits of Christ, *inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world.*

London, October 15, 1784.

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## AN EXTRACT

Of the Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr. JOHN WESLEY'S JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 286.]

**T**HURSDAY 25. While I was preaching at *Newgate* on these words, *He that believeth hath everlasting life*: I was insensibly led, without any previous design, to declare strongly

strongly and explicitly, that **GOD** *willeth all men to be thus saved*; and to pray that “if this were not the truth of **GOD**, he would not suffer the blind to go out of the way; but if it were, he would bear witness to his word.” Immediately one, and another, and another sunk to the earth: they dropped on every side as thunderstruck. One of them cried aloud. We besought **GOD** in her behalf, and he turned her heaviness into joy. A second being in the same agony, we called upon **GOD** for her also; and he spoke peace unto her soul. In the evening, I was again prest in spirit to declare, that Christ *gave himself a ransom for all*. And almost before we called upon him, to set to his seal, he answered: one was so wounded by the sword of the spirit, that you would have imagined she could not live a moment. But immediately his abundant kindness was shewed, and she loudly sang of his righteousness.

*Friday 26.* All *Newgate* rang with the cries of those whom the word of **GOD** cut to the heart. Two of whom were in a moment filled with joy, to the astonishment of those that beheld them.

*Sunday 28.* I declared the *free* grace of **GOD** to about 4000 people, from those words, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* At that hour it was, that one who had long continued in sin, from a despair of finding mercy, received a full, clear sense of his pardoning love, and power to sin no more. I then went to *Clifton* (a mile from *Bristol*) at the minister’s desire, who was dangerously ill, and thence returned to a little plain, near *Hannam-mount*, where about 3000 were present. After dinner I went to *Clifton* again. The church was quite full at the prayers and sermon, as was the church-yard at the burial that followed. From *Clifton* we went to *Rose-green*, where were (by computation) near 7000, and thence to *Gloucester-lane* society. After which was our first love-feast in *Baldwin-street*. O how has **GOD** renewed my strength! Who used ten years ago to be so faint and weary, with preaching *twice in one day*!

*Monday 29.*



*Monday 29.* We understood that many were offended at the cries of those on whom the power of GOD came: among whom was a physician, who was much afraid, there might be fraud or imposture in the case. To-day one whom he had known many years, was the first (while I was preaching in *Newgate*) who broke out into *strong cries and tears*. He could hardly believe his own eyes and ears. He went and stood close to her, and observed every symptom, till great drops of sweat ran down her face, and all her bones shook. He then knew not what to think, being clearly convinced, it was not fraud, nor yet any natural disorder. But when both her soul and body were healed in a moment, he acknowledged the finger of GOD.

*Tuesday, May 1.* Many were offended again, and indeed, much more than before. For at *Baldwin-street* my voice could scarce be heard, amidst the groanings of some, and the cries of others, calling aloud to *him that is mighty to save*. I desired all that were sincere of heart, to beseech with me *the Prince exalted for us*, that he would *proclaim deliverance to the captives*. And he soon shewed that he heard our voice. Many of those who had been long in darkness, saw the dawn of a great light: and ten persons (I afterwards found) then began to say in faith, *My Lord and my GOD!*

A *Quaker*, who stood by, was not a little displeased at the *disimulation of these creatures*, and was biting his lips and knitting his brows, when he dropped down as thunder-struck. The agony he was in, was even terrible to behold. We besought GOD, not to lay folly to his charge. And he soon lifted up his head and cried aloud, "Now I know, thou art a prophet of the Lord."

*Wednesday 2.* At *Newgate*, another mourner was comforted. I was desired to step thence to a neighbouring house to see a letter wrote against me, as *a deceiver of the people*, by teaching that GOD *willeth all men to be saved*. One who long had asserted the contrary was there, when a young woman came in (who could say before, "I know that *my Redeemer liveth*") all in tears and in deep  
anguish

anguish of spirit. She said, " she had been reasoning with herself, how these things could be, till she was perplexed more and more, and she now found the Spirit of GOD was departed from her." We began to pray, and she cried out, " he is come! he is come! I again rejoice in GOD my Saviour." Just as we rose from giving thanks, another person reeled four or five steps, and then dropped down. We prayed with her, and left her strongly convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for deliverance.

I did not mention one *J—n H—n*, a weaver, who was at *Baldwin-street* the night before. He was (I understood) a man of a regular life and conversation, one that constantly attended the public prayers and sacrament, and was zealous for the church, and against dissenters of every denomination. Being informed that *people fell into strange fits at the societies*, he came to see and judge for himself. But he was less satisfied than before; insomuch that he went about to his acquaintance one after another, till one in the morning, and laboured above measure to convince them " it was a delusion of the devil." We were going home, when one met us in the street and informed us, "*J—n H—* was fallen raving mad." It seems he had set down to dinner, but had a mind first to end a sermon he had borrowed on " Salvation by faith." In reading the last page, he changed colour, fell off his chair, and began screaming terribly and beating himself against the ground. The neighbours were alarmed and flock-ed together to the house. Between one and two I came in, and found him on the floor, the room being full of people, whom his wife would have kept without; but he cried aloud, " No; let them all come, let all the world see the just judgment of GOD." Two or three men were holding him as well as they could. He immediately fixed his eyes upon *me*, and stretching out his hand, cried, " Ay, this is he, who I said was a deceiver of the people. But GOD has overtaken me. I said it was all a delusion. But this is no delusion." He then roared out, " O thou devil! thou cursed devil! Yea, thou legion of devils! thou canst not stay. Christ will cast thee out. I know his work is begun. Tear me to pieces,



thou wilt : but thou canst not hurt me." He then beat himself against the ground again ; his breast heaving at the same time, as in the pangs of death, and great drops of sweat trickling down his face. We all betook ourselves to prayer. His pangs ceased, and both his body and soul were set at liberty.

Thence I went to *Baptist-Mills*, and declared *him* whom GOD hath exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins. Returning to *J—n H—*, we found his voice was lost, and his body weak as that of an infant. But his soul was in peace, full of love, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of GOD.

The women of our society met at seven. During our prayer, one of them fell into a violent agony ; but soon after began to cry out with confidence, *My Lord, and my GOD !* Sat. 5. I preached at the desire of an unknown correspondent, on those excellent words, (if well understood, as recommending faith, resignation, patience, meekness) *Be still, and know that I am GOD.*

Sunday 6. I preached in the morning, to 5 or 6000 people, on, *Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven.* (The same words on which I preached the next day, and on *Wed.* at *Baptist-Mills.*) On *Hannam-Mount* I preached to about three thousand, on, *The scripture hath concluded all under sin :* At two at *Clifton* church, on *Christ our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption ;* and about five, at *Rose-Green* on the *Promise by faith of Jesus Christ which is given to them that believe.*

Monday 7. I was preparing to set out for *Pensford*, having now had leave to preach in the church, when I received the following note:

Sir, *Our minister, having been informed you are beside yourself, does not care you should preach in any of his churches.*—I went however, and on *Priest-Down*, about half a mile from *Pensford*, preached *Christ our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.*

Tuesday 8. I went to *Bath*, but was not suffered to be in the meadow where I was before ; which occasioned the offer

of a much more convenient place; where I preached Christ to about 1000 souls.

*Wednesday 9.* We took possession of a piece of ground, near St. James's church-yard, in the *Horse-Fair*, where it was designed to build a room, large enough to contain both the societies of *Nicholas* and *Baldwin-street*, and such of their acquaintance as might desire to be present with them, at such times as the scripture was expounded. And on *Sat. 12*, the first stone was laid, with the voice of praise and thanksgiving.

I had not at first the least apprehension or design, of being personally engaged, either in the expence of this work, or in the direction of it; having appointed eleven feoffees, on whom I supposed these burthens would fall of course. But I quickly found my mistake; first with regard to the expence: for the whole undertaking must have stood still, had not I immediately taken upon myself the payment of all the workmen; so that before I knew where I was, I had contracted a debt of more than an hundred and fifty pounds. And this I was to discharge how I could; the subscriptions of both societies not amounting to one quarter of the sum. And as to the direction of the work, I presently received letters from my friends in *London*, Mr. *Whitefield* in particular, backed with a message by one just come from thence, that neither he nor they would have any thing to do with the building, neither contribute any thing towards it, unless I would instantly discharge all feoffees, and do every thing in my own name. Many reasons they gave for this; but one was enough, viz. "That such feoffees always would have it in their power to controul me, and if I preached not as they liked, to turn me out of the room I had built." I accordingly yielded to their advice, and calling all the feoffees together, cancelled (no man opposing) the instrument made before, and took the whole management into my own hands. Money, it is true, I had not, nor any human prospect or probability of procuring it. But I knew *the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof*, and in his name set out, nothing doubting.

[Continued at page 390.]



## THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

## THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[Continued from page 296.]

“**T**O give you a clear view of this, I need only transcribe part of a letter, which she wrote to me, May 23, 1757.

“ My dearest friend,

The Lord has been indeed merciful, above all we can ask or think. I found a greater blessing the last time I was with you than ever. I am more enabled to prayer, and to an earnest seeking after holiness. But what most stirs me up is, I seem to hear the Lord calling upon me, “ *Depart ye, depart ye: go ye out thence: touch not the unclean thing: be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.*” For some time these words have been much in my mind, with both pleasure and profit. But within this day or two, the Lord has more clearly shewn me the way wherein I ought to walk. He seems to call me out to more activeness; so that I am ready to cry out, ‘ what wouldst thou have me to do?’ Then I consider, can I do any more for the souls or bodies of the poor about me? But this does not seem to be the thing. What I am now led to wish for is, by the grace of GOD, to be wholly given up to the church. I plainly see, I have no more to do with the world, than to allow myself the necessaries of life. And though it has pleased GOD that I have no need to work for my living, yet surely that is no reason my hand should be idle. I would be like those described, 1 Tim. v. 10. *To bring up children, to lodge strangers, to be ready to do the meanest offices for the saints: to relieve the afflicted, to visit the fatherless and widow, and diligently to follow every good work.* O pray for me that the Lord may shorten his work in me, and quickly make an end of sin! O that he would say to my soul, *thou art all fair, my love! There is no spot in thee.*

O when

O when shall I be wholly given up, both body and soul, to him who gave himself for me!"

"I admired the spirit of this letter; but little expected to see these good desires brought so fully into practice, as they were in a few years after. And this may suffice as a clear proof, that GOD fulfils the desires of them that fear him; yea, and shews them the path, wherein he would have them to walk. That her light given before was not delusive, is plain; as it is well known, how many years she has *brought up children, lodged strangers*, relieved the afflicted, and *diligently followed every good work*.

"With regard to the dear saint, that is now swallowed up in his beloved employment, praise and adoration, it is eight or nine and twenty years, since I was first favoured with his heavenly conversation in company with Mr. *Walsh* and a few other friends, most of whom are now in the world of spirits. At these seasons, how frequently did we feel,

"The o'erwhelming power of saving grace!"

How frequently were we silenced thereby, while tears of love our eyes o'erflowed! It sweetly affects my soul, while I recollect the humility, fervor of spirit and strength of faith, with which dear Mr. *Fletcher* so often poured out his soul before the Great Three One, at whose feet we have lain in holy shame and divine silence, till it seemed earth was turned to heaven! With what delight does my soul recall those precious moments! Yet a little while, and we shall all magnify his name together.

"This heavenly-minded servant of the Lord resembled him likewise in his love to precious souls. I heard him preach his first sermon at West-street chapel. I think his text was, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*. His spirit appeared in his whole attitude and action, though he could not well find words in the *English* language to express himself: but he supplied that defect, by offering up prayers, tears, and sighs abundantly. Nearly about this time he saw Miss *Bosanquet*, and began his acquaintance with her. But although they had a particular esteem for each



each other, yet they had no correspondence for above twenty years. It was not till the yearly conference drew near, in July 1781, that he paid her a visit at her own house near *Leeds*. They had much conversation together, and contracted an intimate acquaintance. After a few days, Miss *Bosanquet* asked Mr. *Wesley's* advice, concerning Mr. *Fletcher's* proposal, who approved it entirely, being persuaded, it would be much to the glory of GOD. He spent much of his time at *Cross-hall*, Miss *Bosanquet's* house, till the following January. His general conversation was praising GOD, and speaking of the love of our dear Redeemer. He took opportunities likewise of speaking to every one in the family, concerning the state of their souls, and giving them from time to time such directions as were suitable thereto. At other times, he met us all together, and gave us proper exhortations and directions. Our daily meals were as a sacrament. When he drank to any one, it was, "heavenly health," or "the cup of salvation." At, or after the meal, he generally begun, or called us to begin that verse,

" Still, O my soul, prolong  
 The never-ceasing song!  
 Christ my theme, my hope, my joy,  
 His be all my happy days!  
 Praise my every hour employ:  
 Every breath be spent in praise!"

After dinner he often sung several verses of the hymn called primitive christianity: particularly those lines,

" O that my Lord would count me meet,  
 To wash his dear disciples' feet!"

Sometimes he read many of those verses with tears streaming down his face. Thus did he walk with GOD, filled with the spirit of his beloved Lord: confirming his love to all the family, and caring both for their spiritual and temporal concerns,

" My

“ My soul was much affected, when he asked each of us, in a sweet, humble manner, Can you give me your friend ? to think of parting was indeed grievous to us all. Yet we did not dare to withhold her from him : as we all believed the union was of GOD, and would be to their present and eternal benefit. The first sermon which he preached in *Leeds*, on the Sunday morning before the conference, will never be forgotten by any that heard it, who desire to be perfect in love. He preached in many places while in *Yorkshire*, and to numerous congregations. I have heard of many who were greatly blest thereby : some convinced, others set at liberty. And whenever he either preached or conversed, the comforts of the Holy Ghost were multiplied.

“ Monday, November 12, was the day appointed for the outward uniting of those, whose hearts were before united by the Holy Spirit. In the morning several friends met together on this solemn occasion : who can all, as well as I, truly say, I have been at one Christian wedding. Jesus was invited, and truly he was at our *Cana*. We reached *Cross-hall* before family prayers : Mr. *Fletcher* was dressed in his canonicals : and after giving out one of Mr. *Wesley*'s marriage hymns, he read the seventh, eighth and ninth verses of the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation : and spoke from them in such a manner, as greatly tended to spiritualize the solemnities of the day. He said, “ We invite you to our wedding : but the Holy Ghost here invites you to the marriage of the Lamb. The bride, the Lamb's wife, has made herself ready. This bride consists of the whole church triumphant and militant united together. Ye may all be the bride, and Jesus will condescend to be the bridegroom. Make yourself ready by being filled with the Spirit.” He was very solemn in prayer, and said, “ Lord, thou knowest, we would not take this step, if we had not eternity in view, and if we were not as willing to be carried into the church-yard, as to go into the church.” At breakfast he reminded us, the postilions are now ready to carry us to the church, in order to see our nuptials solemnized ; but death will soon be here, to transport us to the marriage of the Lamb.

“ On



“ On the way to the church [*Batley church*, which was near two miles off] he spoke much of the mystery which is couched under marriage, namely the union between Christ and his church. “ The first *Adam*, said he, received his wife from his side : our heavenly *Adam* purchased his bride by a fountain, opened in his pierced side.” They were married in the face of the congregation ; the doors were opened, and every one came in that would. We then returned home, and spent a considerable time in singing and prayer. We were near twenty of us. I then presented Mrs. *Fletcher* with some wedding hymns. She looked them over, and gave them to Mr. *Fletcher*. He read the scripture at the top, namely, *Husbands love your wives* : and added, *As Christ loved the church*. Then turning to us, he said, My GOD, what a task ! help me, my friends, by your prayers to fulfil it. As Christ loved the church ! He laid aside his glory for her ! he submitted to be born into our world ; to be clothed with a human body, subject to all our sinless infirmities. He endured shame, contempt, pain, yea, *death itself* for his church ! O my GOD, none is able to fulfil this task without thine almighty aid. Help me, O my GOD ! Pray for me, O my friends !

“ He next read, *Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands*. Mrs. *Fletcher* added, *As unto the Lord*. Well, my dear, returned Mr. *Fletcher*, Only in the Lord. And if ever I wish you to do any thing otherwise, resist me with all your might. From dinner, which was a spiritual meal, as well as a natural one, until tea-time, our time was spent chiefly in fervent prayer or singing. After singing the covenant hymn, Mr. *Fletcher* went to Mrs. *Fletcher* and said to her, “ Well, my dearest friend, will you join with me in joining ourselves in a perpetual covenant to the Lord ? Will you with me serve him in his members ? Will you help me to bring souls to the blessed Redeemer ? and in every possible way this day, lay yourself under the strongest ties you can, to help me to glorify my gracious Lord ?” She answered, like one that knew wherein her strength lay, “ May my “ GOD help me so to do !”

“ In

“ In the evening Mr. *Valton* preached in the hall from those most suitable words, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.* His words did not fall to the ground: many were greatly refreshed. After preaching, there was a sweet contest among us: every one thought, I in particular owe the greatest debt of praise: till we jointly agreed to sing,

“ I’ll praise my Maker, while I’ve breath,  
And when my voice is lost in death,  
Praise shall employ my nobler powers :  
My days of praise shall ne’er be past,  
While life, or thought, or being last,  
Or immortality endures.”

“ On the Wednesday following the select society met: and it was a precious season. Among other things Mr. *Fletcher* said, “ Some of you perhaps may be a little surprized at the step my dearest friend and I have taken. But I assure you, it was the result of much prayer and mature deliberation. Five and twenty years ago, when I first saw my dear wife, I thought, if I ever married, she should be the person. But she was too rich for me to think of. So I banished every thought of the kind. For many years after, I had a distaste to a married life, thinking it impossible to be as much devoted to GOD in a married as in a single life. But this objection was removed, by reading *Enoch begat sons and daughters. And Enoch walked with GOD, and was not: for GOD took him.* I then saw, if *Enoch* at the head of a family might walk with GOD, and be fit for translation; our souls under the gospel-dispensation might attain the highest degree of holiness in a similar state, if too great an attachment leading the soul from GOD, rather than to him did not take place: instead of that, which should be a means of increasing its union with Jesus. Yet still many obstacles stood in the way: but at length they were all removed. Every mountain became a plain, and we are both well assured, that the step we took had the full approbation of GOD.”



“ On January 2, 1782, we had a very solemn parting. But in the midst of all the sorrow which we felt, there was a sweet assurance that we should meet again, not only in this world, but

“ Where death shall all be done away;  
And bodies part no more.”

“ To repeat all the precious sayings of this servant of GOD, would require many volumes : for his mouth was always opened with wisdom, tending to minister grace to the hearers. My earnest prayer is, that the spirit of faith and love, and heavenly wisdom, may rest upon *you* also, and guide you in all your extensive labours, till they are swallowed up in eternal rest. I remain, Rev. Sir,

Your unworthy child and servant,

S. C.”

4. I cannot help subjoining a reflection here, which at that time affected me much. Although I could in no wise condemn this marriage, yet on one account it gave me pain. When I was young, I was exceedingly affected with a relation in Mr. *Herbert's* life—an account of Mr. *Farrar's* family, at *Little Giddings*, in *Huntingdon-shire* : I longed to see such another family in any part of the three kingdoms. At length I had my desire : I did see exactly such another family : I saw a family full as much devoted to GOD : full as regular in all their exercises of devotion, and at least as exemplary in every branch of Christian holiness. This I saw, by the peculiar Providence of GOD, settled at *Layton-Stone*. O that it had continued there ! The removal of it into *York-shire* I did not advise or approve of : However, I rejoiced to see it settled somewhere : namely at *Cross-hall*, near *Leeds* : Again I did all that was in my power, to perpetuate this glorious institution. It was now totally dissolved ; and yet by a means which I did not dare to oppose ! O GOD, how unsearchable are thy judgments ; and thy ways past finding out !

CHAP.

## C H A P. VIII.

*From his marriage till the beginning of his last illness.*

1. **F**ROM the time of his settling at *Madeley* with Mrs. *Fletcher*, he had no return of his consumptive disorder. On the contrary, by the blessing of GOD on her peculiar care and tenderness, not only his health was confirmed, but his strength restored as in the days of his youth. In the mean time he took care to employ all his returning strength in the work of faith and the labour of love: more particularly in that which he had always found to be one of the most difficult parts of his duty. There are in this parish, through the lenity of the magistrates, no less than eight public houses. These are well known to have been continual nurseries of sin, particularly on Sunday evenings. It had been for many years his unwearied endeavour to put an end to these abuses. Yet as he very seldom had a churchwarden who was heartily willing to second him therein, his endeavours were almost ineffectual, producing very little fruit. But for two years GOD was now pleased to favour him with a churchwarden, who was resolved to act according to his oath: he then cheerfully renewed his endeavours, visiting several of these houses every Sunday (all of them in their turn). In every one he bore a faithful testimony. And in some it has been attended with much good. O that no one of those who have been at any time within the reach of his voice, may finally inherit that curse, *Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish!*

2. For many years he had felt, with the deepest sensibility, the disconsolate condition of poor uninstructed children: and some years ago he began a school, wherein he taught them himself every day. After pursuing this method for some time, he erected a school in *Madeley-wood*. But afterward his thoughts were much employed concerning the Sunday-schools: especially since they were recommended to him in a letter from Mrs. *Derby*, a person whom he always found ready to promote every good work. He then earnestly



ently set about promoting them in his own parish. Three hundred children were soon gathered together, whom he took every opportunity of instructing by regular meetings, for some time before the schools were opened. These meetings he attended with the utmost diligence to the very Thursday before his illness. In order to encourage the children, his method was to give them little hymn-books, pointing them to some friend or neighbour, who would teach them the hymns, and instruct them to sing. The little creatures were greatly taken with this new employment: insomuch that many of them would scarce allow themselves time to eat or sleep, for the desire they had of learning their lessons. At every meeting, after enquiring who had made the greatest proficiency, he distinguished them by some little reward.

3. In the instructing of children, one great difficulty is, to draw and fix their attention. He had a singular gift for doing this, by making advantage of any incident that offered. One day, while he had a considerable number of children before him in the preaching-house, as he was persuading them to mind what they were about, and to remember the text which he was going to mention, just then a robin flew into the house, and their eyes were presently turned after him. "Now," said he, "I see you can attend to that robin. Well, I will take that robin for my text." He then gave them an useful lecture on the harmlessness of that little creature and the tender care of its Creator.

4. When he observed that the number of children, instead of falling off, as was expected, increased continually, he wrote some proposals to the parish, which were received with the greatest unanimity. Many of the rich as well as the trading people, lent their helping hand, not only to defray the expence of teachers, but also to raise a convenient house in *Coalbrook-dale*, for the instruction of the numerous children that were on that side of the parish.

[Continued at Page 391.]

The JOURNAL of FRANCIS ASBURY, *Bishop of the*  
*Methodist-Episcopal Church.*

From March 26, 1772, to April 14, 1773.

[Continued from page 302.]

**T**UESDAY, *November 23.* Preached at *Winchester*, to a stupid kind of people, in an unfinished house; and while the rain beat in upon me, many people looked and wondered at the stranger. However, I delivered my message with some energy, and then rode 3 miles to *Richard Owen's*, where the Lord enabled me to preach to a great number of people, with power.

Wednesday 24. We rode about 20 miles to my old friend *Joshua Owen's*, and found a very agreeable house and family. The old man is *an Israelite indeed*. He was once a serious church-man who fought for the truth; and now GOD has revealed it to him. The Lord has also begun to bless his family. He has one son a preacher, and the rest of his children are very thoughtful. Though it was a very rainy day, there were many people, and my heart was greatly enlarged towards them in preaching.

Thursday 25. The congregation was also large at Mr. *Merryman's*, and the Lord was with me. But on Friday, at Mr. *Evans's* the congregation was small, and I was much frightened. The same evening rode to town. Sat. 28. Preached at the *Point*, and do earnestly long to feel my heart more given up to GOD.

Lord's day 30. It was a rainy day, but rode to the *Point*, and after preaching to a large congregation, returned to town and dined at *William Moore's*. I preached in town, both at 3, and at 6 o'clock.

Monday, *December 1.* Rode in company with Mrs. *Rachel Hewlings*, Mrs. *Rogers*, and the widow *White*, to *Nathan Perrigo's*, and, with power from the Lord, preached to a large number of people. Then rode to *William Lynch's*,



*Lynch's*, to whom I was introduced by Mrs. *Hewlings*, and had many to hear the word of truth.

Tuesday 2. Lodged to-night in a damp bed, and though I expected some bad consequence, yet through mercy I received no injury. The next day, at *Joppa*, there were many people from the country, and some from the town.

Thursday 4. Preached at *Joseph Presbury's* to many people who could feel the word; and with much power in my own soul. Then rode 3 miles into the Neck, and had a solemn, heart-affecting time, while preaching from Rev. ii. 11. a passage which, it seems, just suited their case: afterwards returned to *Joseph Presbury's*. Friday 5. After preaching, *Joseph Daliam* conducted me to his house, and treated me with great kindness. Preached at his house, at 3 o'clock; and on Saturday, at *Moses Browne's*, about 3 miles off.

Lord's day 7. Went about 5 miles to preach in our first preaching-house. The house had no windows or doors: the weather was very cold; so that my heart pitied the people when I saw them so exposed. Putting a handkerchief over my head, I preached, and after an hour's intermission (the people waiting all the time in the cold) preached again.

Monday 8. *John King* and I went about 5 miles to lodge; and the next morning set off for *Bohemia*. We passed through *Charlestown*, and dined at the head of *Elk*. We lodged at *Robert Thompson's*, where I spoke closely to the poor negroes, who took some notice of what was said. Since I went from here last, my travels have been, perhaps, as much as 300 miles in about six weeks. And, glory to GOD, I have been favoured with inward peace and purity; and with zeal and power in my public exercises. Rode to *Bird's* tavern for my trunk and box of books; and received a letter from Mr. *P*—which surpasses every thing I ever have met with from a Methodist preacher. The Lord judge between him and me! Then went to *Solomon Hersey's*, and after preaching with life and freedom, to a few people, spoke to them, one by one, concerning the state of their souls.

Tuesday

Tuesday 9. I intended to have preached at *George-town*; but in my way, found a large house belonging to a certain Mr. *Byard*, in which Mr. *Whitefield* had preached some years ago, to some *Hollanders*, who were eminent for religion: but the old people are now dead. Then proceeded on my way to *George-town*, and lodged at the house of a *Quaker*. He treated me with great kindness; and appeared to be an understanding man. His wife was somewhat tender in religious conversation. In the evening the negroes were collected, and I spoke to them in exhortation. In the morning 3 or 4 white people also attended at prayer, to whom I spoke about their souls. The friend went with me in the morning, and when I asked him what satisfaction he required, he told me, no more than what he had received.

Wednesday 10. Preached to many people, rich and poor, at *John Kandle's*, and at another place in the evening.

Friday 12. Went 12 miles into Kent county, and had many great people to hear me. But before preaching, one Mr. *Read*, a church-minister, came to me and desired to know who I was, and whether I was licenced. I told him who I was. He spoke great swelling words; and told me he had authority over the people, and was charged with the care of their souls. He also told me, that I could not, and should not, preach; and if I did, he would proceed against me according to law. I let him know, that I came to preach, and preach I would; and farther asked him, if he had authority to bind the consciences of the people; or if he was a justice of the peace; and told him, I thought he had nothing to do with me. He charged me with making a schism. I told him, that I did not draw the people from the church; and asked him, if his church was then open? He told me that I hindered people from their work; but I asked him, if fairs and horse-races did not hinder them? And farther told him that I came to help him. He said, he had not hired me for an assistant, and did not want my help. I told him, if there were no swearers or other sinners, he was sufficient. But, said he, what did  
you



you come for? I replied, to turn finners to GOD. He said, cannot I do that as well as you? I told him that I had authority from GOD. He then laughed at me and said, you are a fine fellow indeed! I told him, I did not do this to invalidate his authority, and also gave him to understand that I did not wish to dispute with him. But he said, he had business with me, and came into the house in a great rage. I began to preach, and urged the people to repent and turn from all their transgressions, so iniquity should not prove their ruin. After preaching, the parson went out and told the people; they did wrong in coming to hear me; and said that I spoke against learning. Whereas, I only spoke to this purpose,—when a man turned from all sin, he would adorn every character in life, both in church and state. Then left him and preached at *John Randle's* at seven o'clock.

Lord's day 14. Preached twice, with very little intermission, to many people collected at a school-house near *Robert Thompson's*; and then rode to *Solomon Hersey's*, and found it a comfortable time, while preaching at 6 o'clock. On Monday rode to *Newcastle*, and preached to a large company. My soul has lately been much bowed down.

Tuesday 16. There were but few people attended preaching at Mr. *Stedham's*; and as the next day was wet; staid and had a family-meeting. On Thursday, went to Mr. *Tuffey's*. My mind has been much affected lately. May the Lord support and teach me! After preaching at Mr. *Tuffey's*, went to hear a New Light, and found but little satisfaction.

Lord's day 21. Though it rained much; yet many people attended preaching at *Isaac Hersey's*. Then preached at a place about five miles off; and rode thence to *Newcastle*, where many people attended at night. The Lord favoured me with power, and my mind has been lately kept in peace. Monday 22, set out for *Bohemia*; and though my body was much fatigued with the ride; and my head ached violently, yet in the evening I enforced these words—*Be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless*; and endeavoured to shew them, that in justification,

edification, we have peace; in sanctification we are without spot; and in perfect love we are blameless; and then proceeded to shew them, wherein we must be diligent.

Tuesday 23. On my way to *Susquehannah*, a person came for me to visit one Mrs. Thomas, who was dying with a dropfy. Then proceeded to *Josiah Dellam's*; and the next day set off for *Joseph Presbury's*, to attend our quarterly meeting. Many people attended, and several friends came many miles. I preached from Acts xx. 28. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, &c.* After shewing to whom the charge was given, I proceeded to enforce the subject thus,

- I. Take heed to your spirits.
- II. Take heed to your practice.
- III. Take heed to your doctrine.
- IV. Take heed to the flock.
  1. Those that are under deep conviction.
  2. Those that are true believers.
  3. Those that are sorely tempted.
  4. Those that are groaning for full redemption.
  5. Those that have backsliden.

Then urged the motives to this duty. We afterwards proceeded to our temporal business, and considered the following propositions.

1. What are our collections? We found them sufficient to defray our expences.
2. How are the preachers stationed? Brother *Strawbridge* and brother *Owens* in *Frederick* county. Brother *King*, brother *Webster* and *Isaac Rawlins* on the other side of the bay; and myself in *Baltimore*.
3. Shall we be strict in our society-meetings, and not admit strangers? Agreed.
4. Shall we drop preaching in the day time through the week? Not agreed to.
5. Will the people be contented without our administering the sacrament? *John King* was neuter; brother *Strawbridge* plead much for the ordinances; and so did the people, who appeared to be much biased by him. I told them, I would not agree to it at that time, and insisted on our abiding by



our rules. But Mr. *Boardman* had given them their way at the quarterly meeting held here before, and I am obliged to connive at some things for the sake of peace.

6. Shall we make collections weekly, to pay the preachers' board and expences? This was not agreed to. We then enquired into the moral characters of the preachers and exhorters. Only one exhorter was found any way doubtful, and we have great hopes of him. Brother *Strawbridge* received £. 8 quarterage; brother *King* and myself £. 6 each. Great love subsisted among us in this meeting, and we parted in much peace.

Then went to *Josiah Dellam's*; and on christmas-day attended the church, and heard parson *West* preach a plain useful sermon, which contained much truth; and afterwards received the sacrament. Then rode 5 miles to *Bush*, but as Mr. *Strawbridge* had not given public notice, few people attended, and the preaching was late. Perhaps Mr. *Strawbridge* omitted to give public notice, that it might prevent my going to church. The next day rode to *Warnet Preston's*, where we had a large congregation, and a very comfortable meeting. On the same day, at the house of *Henry Waters, N. W—s* spoke with great care, but with very little life or depth. He may improve and make a useful preacher in time.

Lord's day 27. Rode to the widow *Bond's*, and preached twice, with very little intermission, to a great number of people. Appointing a meeting in the evening, I had an opportunity of hearing *Isaac Rawlins* exhort. His exhortation was coarse and loud enough, though with some depth. I gave him a little advice which he seemed willing to take.

Monday 28. Many people of various kinds attended at *A. Standford's*. Preached afterwards at *I. Moore's* in the evening, and went thence to *I. B—s* and met the class.

[Continued at page 401.]

LETTERS,

## LETTERS, &amp;c.

*An extract of a letter from JOHN HAGERTY, Elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, to Bishop ASBURY, dated Annapolis, February 17, 1789.*

*My very dear Brother,*

YOUR kind letter by brother *Chalmers* was as a cordial to my soul. I did expect we should have a revival among us when our house was removed, but the Lord has prevented my expectation, and begun a most glorious work indeed, at a time and in a manner I did not expect. Brother *Chalmers* brought the holy fire from *Virginia* with him. He and brother *Long* took a little tour in the country, and the flame broke out, and such a work is begun about brother *Weems's*, the swamp, and about *Abel Hill's*, and all through that part of the country, as was never known before in this state. They returned on Monday, *Jan. 26*, and that night the work of powerful conviction began; first in brother *Long's* family. All his children got awakened, and are now converted to GOD. On the Wednesday following some were alarmed in the prayer-meeting. We had a watch-night on Thursday evening, and some more got alarmed. But on Friday night the work of conversion began in a way I little expected. I met the class of young men, and received three into class. When class-meeting was over, I heard a poor soul groaning and praying. We went down stairs, and found in the passage a black woman in great distress. We began exhorting her, and then proceeded to singing and prayer. The noise called in others; another black woman was soon on her knees beside the former, and GOD was pleased to set both their souls at liberty; and then an old man, and then a member whom I had joined that night, and then the man of the house in which we were, so that about nine o'clock we had many converted, among whom was my wife's brother, *Joseph*, (a brand indeed plucked out of the fire,) a daughter of Mr. *Stowbridge*, and all three of brother *Long's* children; my brother in law's wife also got her



her soul converted. I think about 15 found the peace of GOD at that time. We had a few on Monday night that found peace. Brother *Pigman* came to town this day, and preached a sweet, smooth, edifying sermon. I felt much of the power of GOD in my soul, and longed to say something to the people. When he concluded, I spoke a few words. I began by singing and then exhorted, and the power of GOD came in a wonderful manner into my soul, and I think we had one of the loudest shouts I ever remember to have heard. Now it was that I entered into the spirit of the work. I approved of it before, but was not in the spirit of it. O how clear did the light shine upon my soul! I saw, and, glory be to GOD, I still see the way to the kingdom of heaven clearer than ever. I may say, I am become, as it were, a new man; but what have I gained? An ill-name. I that was reckoned by some who knew no better, a man of sense, am now become a fool. I never heard reproach with such joy before; but, glory be to GOD, the work prospers. I then requested as many as had a desire, to come forth into the great congregation, and join the society. Twenty four, one after another, gave me their names, most of whom had found peace. Our class-meetings are exceeding lively. Brother *Forrest* was in town, and met the young men, and five of them struggled into life. Sunday morning the power of GOD was with us, many were cut to the heart: in the afternoon we had another shout, and five or six were set at liberty; and many spake feelingly at the love-feast in the evening. This was a day to be remembered by many, and especially by myself. Such transporting joy filled my soul, that I only wanted wings to fly away, and rest for ever with my Lord and Saviour. Blessed be GOD, that ever I was born! The Christians feel the shower, and many of them profess holiness of heart. We had a remarkable season on Monday night; I think at least 20 found the Lord. On Tuesday I went to supply brother *Forrest's* place at the head of *South-River*. As soon as I began to speak, the Lord applied his word, and sinners began to tremble: we had a comfortable time. All the members in

society

society (who had almost fainted in their minds) got a fresh spring for heaven, and such a time they have not had for years past. I gave out for a prayer-meeting in the evening : the people flocked together, and the Lord began to work. We had as many as five who professed to find peace. One of them was powerfully converted to GOD. When I returned to town we had another wonderful shout, and one great persecutor had a clear manifestation of GOD's love. But you know satan can not quietly let his subjects go : he raises a storm of lies, the only weapon he has at present to fight with. He also threatens, but can go no farther : they have banished me out of town by report, and are to cut off my ears, &c. &c. My heart pities and prays for them, and rejoices to hear it ; for when the devil has lifted them up to the height, I trust GOD will convert their souls, and make them witnesses for himself. We have had 84 joined the society, since January 30, and almost every one of them is converted to GOD ; and many more are ready to come in. But who are they ? Not the rich and great ; but few of these are seen among us at all ; we have some of the basest characters, and some otherwise : but oh what a spirit of love reigns among us ! It is good to be here ; my hopes are up : we have scarce a meeting, but some one gets converted. Praised be our GOD ! Pray for

Your most affectionate

Though unworthy brother in the Lord,

JOHN HAGERTY.



Mr. PRIEST's *Account of an old Woman.*

Cork, Feb. 16, 1778.

**R**IDING over a mountain called *Sleeveord*, in the county of *Tipperary*, my mare losing a shoe, I stopped at a smith's shop to have one put on. The smith taking me into the house, I observed an old withered woman sitting in the chimney-corner. On finding my heart grow  
warm



warm, I drew near to her and said, As you seem, by the course of nature, to be on the confines of eternity, have you any assurance where you are going? She said, "Blessed be GOD I have!" On asking her if her assurance was well grounded? she said, "I hope it is." On asking her what the ground of her assurance was? she said, "I have the love of GOD shed abroad in my heart, and the light of his countenance shining on my soul." I then asked, *how* and *when* she came by that experience? She said, "When I was about eighteen years old, GOD convinced me that I was a sinner. On seeing this, I was in great distress for some time. But one day, as I was going for water, across a field, the Lord arrested me by the way: on which I laid down my pail, and fell on my knees; and while I was at prayer, he manifested his pardoning love to my soul, shed abroad his love in my heart, and gave me an assurance of his favour. I am now eighty one, or eighty two years old, and from that time to the present, I have not been one day without a sense of the love of GOD in my heart, and the light of his countenance shining upon me." I then asked her how she came to know she was a sinner? she answered, "by reading good books."

I have often visited her since, and always found her uniform and consistent in her accounts. Having never met with any one before who experienced these things, she said, she thought herself alone in the world, and seemed rather surprised at the accounts I gave of my own, and others experience.

Thus we see, GOD has his secret ones, even where the gospel is not preached. Therefore let us rejoice in hope of meeting many in glory who were unknown, not only to us, but even to his whole church on earth.

## INGRATITUDE.

[Extracted from a late author.]

**A**RTABANES was distinguished with peculiar favour by a wise, powerful and good prince. A magnificent palace, surrounded with a delightful garden, was provided for his residence. He partook of all the luxuries of his sovereign's table; was invested with extensive authority, and admitted to the honour of a free intercourse with his gracious master. But *Artabanes* was insensible of the advantages which he enjoyed. His heart glowed not with gratitude and respect; he avoided the society of his benefactor, and abused his bounty.

I detest such a character, said *Alexis*, with generous indignation! It is your own picture I have drawn, replied *Euphronius*. The great Potentate of heaven and earth has placed you in a world which displays the highest beauty, order and magnificence; and which abounds with every means of convenience, enjoyment and happiness. He has furnished you with such powers of body and mind, as give you dominion over the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field: and he has invited you to hold communion with himself, and to exalt your own nature, by the love and imitation of his divine perfections. Yet your eyes are wandering with brutal gaze, over the fair creation, unconscious of the mighty hand from which it sprung. You have rioted in the profusion of nature, without one secret emotion of gratitude to the sovereign disposer of all good: and you have slighted the glorious converse, and forgotten the presence of that omnipotent Being who fills all space, and exists through all eternity.

Reader, art not thou the man?



## Poetry.

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EDWIN AND ANGELINA.

**T**URN, gentle hermit of the dale,  
And guide my lonely way,  
To where yon taper cheers the vale  
With hospitable ray.

For here, forlorn and lost, I tread;  
With fainting steps and flow,  
Where wilds, immeasurably spread,  
Seem lengthening as I go.

Forbear, my son, the hermit cries,  
To tempt the dangerous gloom;  
For yonder faithless phantom flies  
To lure thee to thy doom.

Here, to the houseless child of want  
My door is open still;  
And though my portion is but scant,  
I give it with good-will.

Then turn to-night, and freely share  
Whate'er my cell bestows;  
My rushy couch and frugal fare,  
My blessing and repose.

No flocks that range the valley free,  
To slaughter I condemn:  
Taught by that Power that pities me  
I learn to pity them.

But

But from the mountain's grassy side  
A guiltless feast I bring;  
A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,  
And water from the spring.

Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego;  
All earth-born cares are wrong:  
Man wants but little here below,  
Nor wants that little long.

Soft as the dew from heaven descends,  
His gentle accents fell;  
The modest stranger lowly bends,  
And follows to the cell.

Far in a wilderness obscure  
The lonely mansion lay,  
A refuge to the neighbouring poor,  
And strangers led astray.

No stores beneath its humble thatch  
Requir'd a master's care;  
The wicket, opening with a latch,  
Receiv'd the harmless pair.

And now, when busy crouds retire  
To take their evening-rest,  
The hermit trimm'd his little fire,  
And cheer'd his pensive guest;

And spread his vegetable store,  
And gaily prest and smil'd,  
And, skill'd in legendary lore,  
The lingering hours beguil'd.

Around in sympathetic mirth  
Its tricks the kitten tries;  
The cricket chirrups in the hearth,  
The crackling faggot flies.

But nothing could a charm impart  
To sooth the stranger's woe;



For grief was heavy at his heart,  
And tears began to flow.

His rising cares the hermit spy'd,  
With answering care oppress'd,  
And whence unhappy youth, he cried,  
The sorrows of thy breast?

From better habitation spurn'd,  
Reluctant dost thou rove?  
Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,  
Or unregarded love?

Alas! the joys that fortune brings,  
Are trifling, and decay;  
And those who prize the paltry things,  
More trifling still than they.

And what is friendship but a name,  
A charm that lulls to sleep;  
A shade that follows wealth or fame,  
And leaves the wretch to weep.

And love is still an emptier sound,  
The modern fair one's jest,  
On earth unseen, or only found  
To warm the turtle's nest.

For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,  
And spurn the sex, he said:  
But, while he spoke, a rising blush  
His love-lorn guest betray'd.

Surpris'd, he sees new beauties rise  
Swift mantling to the view,  
Like colours o'er the morning-skies,  
As bright, as transient too.

The bashful look, the rising blush,  
Alternate spread alarms,  
The lovely stranger stands confess  
A maid in all her charms.

And

And ah! forgive a stranger rude,  
A wretch forlorn, she cried,  
Whose feet unhallow'd thus intrude  
Where heaven and you reside.

But let a maid thy pity share,  
Whom love has taught to stray;  
Who seeks for rest, but finds despair  
Companion of her way.

My father liv'd beside the Tyne,  
A wealthy lord was he;  
And all his wealth was mark'd as mine,  
He had but only me.

To win me from his tender arms,  
Unnumber'd suitors came;  
Who prais'd me for imputed charms,  
And felt or feign'd a flame.

Each hour a mercenary croud  
With richest proffers strove:  
Among the rest, young *Edwin* bow'd,  
But never talk'd of love.

In humble, simplest habit clad,  
No wealth nor power had he;  
Wisdom and worth were all he had,  
But these were all to me.

The blossom opening to the day,  
The dews of heaven refin'd,  
Could nought of purity display  
To emulate his mind.

The dew, the blossom on the tree,  
With charms inconstant shine;  
Their charms were his; but, woe to me!  
Their constancy was mine.

For still I tried each fickle art,  
Importunate and vain:

And,



And, while his passion touch'd my heart,  
I triumph'd in his pain :

Till quite dejected with my scorn,  
He left me to my pride,  
And sought a solitude forlorn,  
In secret, where he died.

But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,  
And well my life shall pay :  
I'll seek the solitude he sought,  
And stretch me where he lay.—

And there, forlorn, despairing, hid;  
I'll lay me down and die;  
'Twas so for me that *Edwin* did,  
And so for him will I.

Forbid it, heaven! the hermit cry'd,  
And clasp'd her to his breast:  
The wondering fair-one turn'd to chide,  
'Twas *Edwin's* self that prest.

THE

# Arminian Magazine,

For AUGUST 1790.

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## PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED.

[BY JOHN WESLEY, M. A.]

[Continued from page 321.]

XXXIV. **P**ERHAPS you will say they are not condemned for actual, but for original sin. What do you mean by this term? The inward corruption of our nature? If so, it has been spoken of before. Or do you mean, the sin which *Adam* committed in paradise? That this is imputed to all men, I allow; yea, that by reason thereof, *the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now*: but that any will be damned for this alone, I allow not, till you shew me where it is written. Bring me plain proof from scripture, and I submit: but till then, I utterly deny it.

XXXV. Should you not rather say, that unbelief is the damning sin? and that those who are condemned in that day, will be therefore condemned, *because they believed not on the name of the only-begotten Son of GOD*. But could they believe? Was not this faith, both the *gift* and the *work* of GOD in the soul? And was it not a gift which he had eternally decreed, never to give them? Was it not a work which he was of old unchangeably determined never to work in their souls? Shall these men then be condemned, because  
GOD.



GOD would not work ; because they did not receive what GOD would not give : could they “ ungrasp the hold of his “ right-hand, or force Omnipotence ? ”

XXXVI. There is, over and above, a peculiar difficulty here. You say, Christ did not die for these men. But if so, there was an impossibility in the very nature of the thing, that they should ever savingly believe. For what is saving faith, but “ a confidence in GOD through Christ that loved *me*, and gave himself for *me* ? ” Loved *thee*, thou reprobate ! gave himself for *thee* ! Away ! thou hast neither part nor lot herein. Thou believe in Christ, thou accursed spirit ! damned, or ever thou wert born ! There never was any object for thy faith : there never was any thing for thee to believe. GOD himself (thus must you speak to be consistent with yourself) with all his omnipotence, could not make thee believe Christ atoned for thy sins, unless he had made thee believe a lie.

XXXVII. If then GOD be just, there cannot, on *your* scheme, be any judgment to come : we may add, nor any future state, either of reward or punishment. If there be such a state, GOD will therein *render to every man according to his deeds : to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life : but to them who do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil.*

But how is this reconcileable with *your* scheme ? You say, the reprobates cannot but do evil, and that the elect, from the day of GOD’s power, cannot but continue in well-doing. You suppose all this is unchangeably decreed : in consequence whereof, GOD acts irresistibly on the one, and satan on the other. Then, it is impossible for either one or the other, to *help acting* as they do ; or rather, to *help being acted upon*, in the manner wherein they are. For if we speak properly, neither the one nor the other can be said to *act* at all. Can a stone be said to act, when it is thrown out of a sling ? or a ball, when it is discharged from a cannon ? No more can a man be said to act, if he be only

ly moved by a force he cannot resist. But if the case be thus, you leave no room either for reward or punishment. Shall the stone be rewarded for rising from the sling, or punished for falling down? Shall the cannon-ball be rewarded for flying towards the sun, or punished for receding from it? As incapable of either reward or punishment is the man, who is supposed to be impelled by a force he cannot resist. Justice can have no place in rewarding or punishing mere machines, driven to and fro by an external force. So that your supposition of GOD's ordaining from eternity whatsoever should be done to the end of the world; as well as that of GOD's acting irresistibly in the elect, and satan's acting irresistibly in the reprobates; utterly overthrows the scripture-doctrine of rewards and punishments, as well as of a judgment to come.

XXXVIII. Thus ill does that election which implies reprobation agree with the scripture account of GOD's justice. And does it agree any better with his truth? How will you reconcile it with those plain assertions, Ezek. xviii. 23. &c. *Have I any pleasure at all, that the wicked should die, saith the Lord GOD? and not that he should return from his ways, and live? Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed—for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.*

Ezek. xxxiii. 11. &c. *As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

XXXIX. But perhaps you will say, "These ought to be limited and explained by other passages of scripture; where— in this doctrine is as clearly affirmed, as it is denied in these?" I must answer, very plain; if this were true, we must give up all the scriptures together: nor would the infidels allow the Bible so honourable a title, as that of a *cunningly devised fable*. But it is not true: it has no colour of truth: it is absolutely, notoriously false. To tear up the very roots of reprobation, and of all doctrines that have



have a necessary connection therewith, GOD declares in his word these three things, and that explicitly, in so many terms, 1. *Christ died for all*, 2 Cor. v. 15. namely, all that were dead in sin, as the words immediately preceding fix the sense: here is the fact affirmed. 2. *He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world*, 1 John ii. 2. even of all those for whom he died: here is the consequence of his dying for all. And 3. *he died for all, that they might not live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them*, 2 Cor. v. 15. that they might be saved from their sins: here is the design, the end of his dying for them. Now shew me the scriptures, wherein GOD declares in equally express terms, 1. *Christ did not die for all*, but for some only. 2. *Christ is not the propitiation for the sins of the whole world*. And 3. *he did not die for all*, at least, not with that intent, *that they should live unto him who died for them*. Shew me, I say, the scriptures that affirm these three things, in equally express terms. You know, there are none. Nor is it possible to evade the force of those above recited, but by supplying in number, what is wanting in weight: by heaping abundance of texts together, whereby, (though none of them speak home to the point) the patrons of that opinion dazzle the eyes of the unwary, and quite overlay the understanding both of themselves, and those that hear them.

XL. To proceed. What an account does this doctrine give, of the sincerity of GOD in a thousand declarations, such as these, *O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my commandments always! that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever*, Deut. v. 29. *My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me: so I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels. O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries*, Psalm. lxxxi. 11, &c. And all this time you suppose GOD had unchangeably ordained, that there never should be *such an heart in them!* that it never

ver should be possible for the people whom he thus *seemed* to lament over, to *harken unto him*, or to *walk in his ways*!

XLI. How clear and strong is the reasoning of Dr. Watts on this head? “It is very hard indeed to vindicate the *sincerity* of the blessed GOD or his Son, in their universal offers of grace and salvation to men; and their sending ministers with such messages and invitations to accept of mercy; if there be not at least a conditional pardon and salvation provided for them.

“His ministers, indeed, as they know not the event of things, may be *sincere* in offering salvation to all persons, according to their general commission, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*: But how can GOD or Christ be *sincere* in sending them with this commission, to offer his grace to all men, if GOD has not provided such grace for *all men*, no, not so much as conditionally.

“It is hard to suppose, that the great GOD, who is truth itself, and faithful in all his dealings, should call upon dying men, to trust in a Saviour for eternal life, when this Saviour has not eternal life entrusted with him, to give them if they do as he requires. ’Tis hard to conceive how the great governor of the world can be *sincere* in inviting sinners, who are on the brink of hell, to cast themselves upon an empty word of invitation, a mere shadow and appearance of support, if there be nothing real to bear them up from these deeps of destruction; nothing but mere words and empty invitations! Can we think that the righteous and holy GOD would encourage his ministers, to call them to leave and rest the weight of their immortal concerns, upon a gospel, a covenant of grace, a Mediator, and his merit and righteousness! all which are a mere nothing with regard to them, a heap of empty names, an unsupporting void which cannot uphold them?”

XLII. Our blessed Lord does indisputably command and invite *all men every where to repent*. He calleth all. He sends his ambassadors, in his name, *to preach the gospel to every creature*. He himself *preached deliverance to the cap-*



*tives*, without any hint of restriction or limitation. But now, in what manner do you represent him, while he is employed in this work? You suppose him to be standing at the prison-doors, having the keys thereof in his hands, and to be continually inviting the prisoners to come forth, commanding them to accept of that invitation, urging every motive which can possibly induce them to comply with that command; adding the most precious promises if they obey; the most dreadful threatnings, if they obey not: and all this time you suppose him to be unalterably determined in himself, never to open the doors for them! even while he is crying, *Come ye, come ye, from that evil place; for why will ye die, O house of Israel!* “Why! (might one of them reply) because we cannot help it. We *cannot* help ourselves; and thou *wilt* not help us. It is not in our power to break the gates of brass; and it is not thy pleasure to open them. Why *will* we die! we *must* die: because it is not thy will to save us.” Alas! my brethren! what kind of sincerity is this, which you ascribe to GOD our Saviour?

XLIII. So ill do election and reprobation agree with the truth and sincerity of GOD. But do they not agree least of all, with the scriptural account of his love and goodness! that attribute which GOD peculiarly claims, wherein he glories above all the rest. It is not written, “GOD is justice, or GOD is truth” (although he is just and true in all his ways;) but it is written, *GOD is love*; love in the abstract, without bounds: and *there is no end of his goodness*. His love extends to those who neither love nor fear him. He is good, even to the evil and the unthankful; yea, without any exception or limitation, to all the children of men. For *the Lord is loving* (or good) *to every man, and his mercy is over all his works*.

But how is GOD good or loving to a *reprobate*, or one that is not *elected*? (you may chuse either term; for if none but the unconditionally-elect are saved, it comes precisely to the same thing.) You cannot say, he is an object of the love or goodness of GOD, with regard to his eternal

eternal estate, whom he created (says Mr. Calvin plainly and fairly) *in vitæ contumeliam, et mortis exitium; to live a reproach, and die everlastingly*. Surely, no one can dream that the goodness of GOD is at all concerned with this man's eternal state. "However, GOD is good to him in "this world." What! when by reason of GOD's unchangeable decree, it had been good for this man, never to have been born, when his very birth was a curse, not a blessing? "Well, but he now enjoys many of the gifts of "GOD, both gifts of nature and of providence. He has "food and raiment, and comforts of various kinds. And "are not all these great blessings?" No, not to him. At the price he is to pay for them, every one of these also is a curse. Every one of these comforts is by an eternal decree, to cost him a thousand pangs in hell. For every moment's pleasure which he now enjoys, he is to suffer the torment of more than a thousand years: for the smoke of that pit which is preparing for him, ascendeth up for ever and ever. GOD knew this would be the fruit of whatever he should enjoy, before the vapour of life fled away. He designed it should. It was his very purpose, in giving him those enjoyments. So that by all these (according to *your* account) he is in truth and reality, only fattening the ox for the slaughter. "Nay, but GOD gives him grace too." Yes, but what kind of grace? *Saving grace*, you own, he has none: none of a saving nature. And the *common grace* he has, was not given with any design to save his soul; nor with any design to do him any good at all; but only to restrain him from hurting the elect; so far from doing him good, that this grace also necessarily increases his damnation. And GOD knows this, you say; and designed it should: it was one great end for which he gave it! Then I desire to know, how is GOD good or loving to this man, either with regard to time or eternity?

XLIV. Let us suppose a particular instance. Here stands a man, who is reprobated from all eternity; or, if you would express it more smoothly, one who is not elected, whom GOD eternally decreed to pass by. Thou hast nothing



thing therefore to expect from GOD after death, but to be cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone; GOD having consigned thy unborn soul to hell, by a decree which cannot pass away. And from the time thou wast born under the irrevocable curse of GOD, thou canst have no peace. For there is no peace to the wicked, and such thou art doomed to continue, even from thy mother's womb. Accordingly, GOD giveth thee of this world's goods, on purpose to enhance thy damnation. He gives thee now substance or friends, in order hereafter to heap the more coals of fire upon thy head. He filleth thee with food, he maketh thee fat and well-liking, to make thee a more specious sacrifice to his vengeance. Good-nature, generosity, a good understanding, various knowledge, it may be, or eloquence, are the flowers wherewith he adorneth thee, thou poor victim, before thou art brought to the slaughter. Thou hast grace too! but what grace? not saving grace. That is not for thee, but for the elect only. Thine may properly be termed *damning grace*; since it is not only such in the event, but in the intention. Thou receivedst it of GOD for that very end, that thou mightest receive the greater damnation. It was not given to convert thee, but only to convince; not to make thee without sin, but without excuse; not to destroy, but to arm the worm that never dieth, and to blow up the fire that never shall be quenched.

XLV. Now I beseech you to consider calmly, how is GOD good or loving to this man? Is not this such love as makes your blood run cold? as causes the ears of him that heareth to tingle? And can you believe there is that man on earth or in hell, who can truly tell GOD, "Thus hast thou done?" Can you think that the loving, the merciful GOD, ever dealt thus with any soul which he hath made? But you must, and do believe this, if you believe unconditional election. For it holds reprobation in its bosom: they never were, never can be divided. Take then your choice. If for the sake of election you will swallow reprobation, well: but if you cannot digest this, you must necessarily give up unconditional election.

[Continued at page 417.]

## SERMON XX.

*On HEBREWS vi. 1.**Let us go on to perfection.*

**T**HE whole sentence runs thus: *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward GOD, which he had just before termed, the first principles of the oracles of GOD, and meat fit for babes, for such as have just tasted that the Lord is gracious.*

That the doing of this is a point of the utmost importance, the apostle intimates in the next words; *This will we do if GOD permit. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the good word of GOD, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance.* As if he had said, if they do not go on to perfection, they are in the utmost danger of falling away. And if they do fall away, it is impossible (that is, exceeding hard) to renew them again unto repentance.

In order to make this very important scripture as easy to be understood as possible, I shall endeavour,

First, To shew what perfection is.

Secondly, To answer some objections to it: and,

Thirdly, To expostulate a little with the opposers of it.

First, I will endeavour to shew what perfection is.

1. And first, I do not conceive the perfection here spoken of, to be the perfection of angels. As those glorious beings never *left their first estate*, never declined from their original perfection, all their native faculties are unimpaired, their understanding in particular is still a lamp of light, their apprehension of all things clear and distinct, and their judgment always true. Hence, though their knowledge is limited, (for they are creatures) though they are ignorant of innumerable things, yet they are not liable to mistake: their



their knowledge is perfect in its kind. And as their affections are all constantly guided by their unerring understanding, so all their actions are suitable thereto; so they do every moment not their own will, but the good and acceptable will of GOD. Therefore it is not possible for man, whose understanding is darkened, to whom mistake is as natural as ignorance, who cannot think at all, but by the mediation of organs which are weakened and depraved, like the other parts of his corruptible body: it is not possible, I say, for man always to think right, to apprehend things distinctly, and to judge truly of them. In consequence hereof his affections, depending on his understanding, are variously disordered. And his words and actions are influenced more or less, by the disorder both of his understanding and affections. It follows, that no man, while in the body, can possibly attain to *angelic perfection*.

2. Neither can any man while he is in a corruptible body, attain to adamic perfection. Adam before his fall, was undoubtedly as pure, as free from sin as even the holy angels. In like manner his understanding was as clear as theirs, and his affections as regular. In virtue of this, as he always judged right, so he was able always to speak and act right. But since man rebelled against GOD, the case is widely different with him. He is no longer able to avoid falling into innumerable mistakes: consequently he cannot always avoid wrong affections, neither can he always think, speak, and act right. Therefore man, in his present state, can no more attain adamic than angelic perfection.

3. The highest perfection which man can attain, while the soul dwells in the body, does not exclude ignorance and error, and a thousand other infirmities. And from wrong judgments, wrong words and actions will often necessarily flow. And in some cases, wrong affections also may spring from the same source. I may judge wrong of *you*: I may think more or less highly of you than I ought to think. And this mistake in my judgment may not only occasion something wrong in my behaviour; but it may have a still deeper

er effect: it may occasion something wrong in my affections. From a wrong apprehension, I may love and esteem you either more or less than I ought. Nor can I be freed from a liability to such a mistake, while I remain in a corruptible body. A thousand infirmities in consequence of this, will attend my spirit, till it returns to GOD who gave it. And in numberless instances it comes short of doing the will of GOD, as Adam did in Paradise. Hence the best of men may say from the heart,

“ Every moment, Lord, I need  
The merit of thy death,”

for innumerable violations of the adamic as well as the angelic law. It is well therefore for us, that we are not now under these, but under the law of love. *Love is now the fulfilling of the law*, which is given to fallen man. This is now, with respect to us, *the perfect law*. But even against this, through the present weakness of our understanding, we are continually liable to transgress. Therefore every man living needs the blood of atonement, or he could not stand before GOD.

4. What is then the perfection of which man is capable, while he dwells in a corruptible body? It is the complying with that kind command, *My son, give me thy heart*. It is the *loving the Lord his GOD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind*. This is the sum of Christian perfection: it is all comprised in that one word, Love. The first branch of it is the love of GOD: and as he that loves GOD, loves his brother also, it is inseparably connected with the second, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. Thou shalt love every man as thy own soul, as Christ loved us. *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*: these contain the whole of Christian perfection.

5. Another view of this is given us in those words of the great apostle, *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus*. For although this immediately and directly refers to the humility of our Lord, yet it may be taken in a  
far



far more extensive sense, so as to include the whole disposition of his mind, all his affections, all his tempers, both toward GOD and man. Now it is certain, that as there was no evil affection in him, so no good affection or temper was wanting. So that *whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are lovely*, are all included in the mind that was in Christ Jesus.

6. St. Paul, when writing to the Galatians, places perfection in yet another view. It is the one undivided fruit of the Spirit, which he describes thus. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace: long-suffering, gentleness, goodness: fidelity*, (so the word should be translated here) *meekness, temperance*. What a glorious constellation of graces is here! Now suppose all these things to be knit together in one, to be united together in the soul of a believer, this is Christian perfection.

7. Again he writes to the Christians at Ephesus, of putting on the new man, which is created after GOD, in righteousness and true holiness. And to the Colossians, of the new man, renewed after the image of him that created him: plainly referring to the words in Genesis (chap. i. 27.) *So GOD created man in his own image*. Now the moral image of GOD consists (as the apostle observes) in *righteousness and true holiness*. By sin this is totally destroyed. And we never can recover it, till we are *created a-new in Christ Jesus*. And this is perfection.

8. St. Peter expresses it in a still different manner, tho' to the same effect. *As he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation*, 1 Peter i. 15. According to this apostle then, perfection is another name for universal holiness: inward and outward righteousness: holiness of life arising from holiness of heart.

9. If any expressions can be stronger than these, they are those of St. Paul to the Thessalonians: (1 Epistle v. 23.) *The GOD of peace himself sanctify you wholly: and may the whole of you, the spirit, the soul and the body* (this is the literal translation) *be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

10. We cannot shew this sanctification in a more excellent way, than by complying with that exhortation of the apostle, *I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of GOD, that ye present your bodies* (yourselves, your souls and bodies; a part put for the whole, by a common figure of speech) *a living sacrifice unto GOD*; to whom ye were consecrated many years ago in baptism. When, what was then devoted is actually presented to GOD, then is the man of GOD perfect.

11. To the same effect St. Peter says, 1 Epistle ii. 5. *Ye are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to GOD through Jesus Christ*. But what sacrifices shall we offer now, seeing the Jewish dispensation is at an end? If you have truly presented yourselves, you offer up to him continually, all your thoughts; and words and actions, through the Son of his love, as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

12. Thus you experience, that he whose name is called Jesus, does not bear that name in vain: that he does in fact *save his people from their sins*, the root as well as the branches. And this *salvation from sin*, from all sin, is another description of perfection, though indeed it expresses only the least, the lower branch of it, only the negative part of the great salvation.

II. I proposed, in the second place, to answer some objections to this scriptural account of perfection.

1. One common objection to it is, That there is no promise of it in the word of GOD. If this be so, we must give it up: we should have no foundation to build upon. For the promises of GOD are the only sure foundation of our hope. But surely there is a very clear and full promise that we shall all love the Lord our GOD with all our hearts. So we read, Deut. xxx. 6. *The Lord thy GOD will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul*. Equally express is the word of our Lord, which is no less a promise, though in the form of a command, (Matt. xxii. 37.) *Thou shalt love the Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*: no words can be more



strong than these, no promise can be more express. In like manner, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* is as express a promise as a command.

2. And indeed that general and unlimited promise, which runs through the whole gospel-dispensation, *I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts*, turns all the commands into promises; and consequently that among the rest, *let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus*. The command here is equivalent to a promise, and gives us full reason to expect, that the Lord will work in us what he requires of us.

3. With regard to the fruit of the spirit, the apostle in affirming, *The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance*: does in effect affirm, that the Holy Spirit actually works love, and these other tempers in those that are led by him. So that here also we have firm ground to tread upon; this scripture likewise being equivalent to a promise, and assuring us that all these shall be wrought in us, provided we are led by the Spirit.

4. And when the apostle says to the *Ephesians*, (chap. iv. 21, &c.) *Ye have been taught, as the truth is in Jesus, to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and to put on the new man, which is created after GOD, (that is, after the image of GOD,) in righteousness and true holiness*: he leaves us no room to doubt, but GOD will thus renew us in the spirit of our mind, and create us anew in the image of GOD, wherein we were at first created. Otherwise it could not be said, that this is the truth as it is in Jesus.

5. The command of GOD given by St. Peter, *Be ye holy as he that hath called you is holy in all manner of conversation*, implies a promise, that we shall be thus holy, if we are not wanting to ourselves. Nothing can be wanting on GOD's part: as he has called us to holiness, he is undoubtedly willing, as well as able, to work this holiness in us. For he cannot mock his helpless creatures, calling us to receive what he never intends to give. That he does call us thereto is undeniable; therefore he will give it, if we are not disobedient to the heavenly calling.

6. The

6. The prayer of St. Paul to the *Theſſalonians*, That GOD would *ſanctify them throughout*, and that the whole of them, the *ſpirit, the ſoul, and the body*, might be *preſerved blameleſs*: will undoubtedly be heard in behalf of all the children of GOD, as well as of thoſe at *Theſſalonica*. Hereby therefore all chriſtians are encouraged to expect the ſame bleſſing from the GOD of peace, namely, that they alſo ſhall be *ſanctified throughout, in ſpirit, ſoul and body*: and that the whole of them ſhall be *preſerved blameleſs, unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*.

7. But the great queſtion is, whether there is any promiſe in ſcripture, that we ſhall be *ſaved from ſin*? Undoubtedly there is. Such is that promiſe, *Pſalm cxxx.* 8. *He ſhall redeem Iſrael from all his ſins*: exactly anſwerable to thoſe words of the angel, *He ſhall ſave his people from their ſins*, and ſurely he is able to ſave unto the uttermoſt, them that come unto GOD through him. Such is that glorious promiſe given through the prophet *Ezekiel*, in the 36th chapter. *Then will I ſprinkle clean water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean; from all your filthineſs and from all your idols will I cleanſe you: a new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you: and I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you a heart of fleſh: and I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes, and ye ſhall keep my judgments, and do them*, ver. 25—27. Such (to mention no more) is that pronounced by *Zachariah*, (*Luke i.* 73—75,) the oath which he ſware to our father *Abraham*, that he would grant unto us, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies (and ſuch doubtleſs are all our ſins) to *ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him all the days of our life*. The laſt part of this promiſe is peculiarly worthy of our obſervation. Leſt any ſhould ſay, “ True, we ſhall be ſaved from our ſins when we die;” that clauſe is remarkably added, as if on purpoſe to obviate this pretence, *all the days of our life*. With what modeſty then can any one affirm, “ That none ſhall enjoy this liberty till death?”



8. "But, say some, this cannot be the meaning of the words; for the thing is impossible." It is impossible to men: but the things impossible with men, are possible with GOD. "Nay, but this is impossible in its own nature: for it implies a contradiction, that a man should be saved from all sin, while he is in a sinful body."

There is a great deal of force in this objection. And perhaps we allow most of what you contend for. We have already allowed that while we are in the body, we cannot be wholly free from mistake. Notwithstanding all our care, we shall still be liable to judge wrong in many instances. And a mistake in judgment will very frequently occasion a mistake in practice. Nay, a wrong judgment may occasion something in the temper or passions, which is not strictly right. It may occasion needless fear, or ill-grounded hope; unreasonable love, or unreasonable aversion. But all this is no way inconsistent with the perfection above described.

9. You say, "Yes, it is inconsistent with the last article: it cannot consist with salvation from sin." I answer, it will perfectly well consist with salvation from sin, according to the following definition of sin, (which I apprehend to be the scriptural definition of it) "A voluntary transgression of a known law." "Nay, but all transgressions of the law of GOD, whether voluntary or involuntary, are sin. For St. *John* says, *All sin is a transgression of the law.*" True, but he does not say, "All transgression of the law is sin." This I deny: let him prove it that can,

To say the truth, this is a mere strife of words. You say, "None is saved from sin in *your* sense of the word:" but I do not admit of that sense, because the word is never so taken in scripture. And you cannot deny the possibility of being saved from sin, in *my* sense of the word. And this is the sense wherein the word sin is over and over taken in scripture.

"But surely we cannot be saved from sin, while we dwell in a *sinful body*." A *sinful body*? I pray, observe, how deeply ambiguous, how equivocal this expression is! But there is no authority for it in scripture: the word *sinful body* is never found there. And as it is totally unscriptural, so  
it

it is palpably absurd. For no *body*, or matter of any kind, can be *sinful*: spirits alone are capable of sin. Pray, in what part of the body should sin lodge? It cannot lodge in the skin, nor in the muscles, or nerves, or veins, or arteries: it cannot be in the bones any more than in the hair, or nails. Only the soul can be the seat of sin.

10. "But does not St. Paul himself say, *They that are in the flesh, cannot please GOD?*" I am afraid the sound of these words has deceived many unwary souls; who have been told those words, *they that are in the flesh*, mean the same as they that are in the body. No, nothing less. *The flesh* in this text no more means the body than it does the soul. Abel, Enoch, Abraham: yea, all that cloud of witnesses recited by St. Paul in the eleventh of the Hebrews, did actually please GOD, while they were in the body, as he himself testifies. The expression therefore here means neither more nor less, than they that are unbelievers, they that are in their natural state, they that are without GOD in the world.

11. But let us attend to the reason of the thing. Why cannot the Almighty sanctify the soul while it is in the body? Cannot he sanctify *you* while you are in this house, as well as in the open air? Can the walls of brick or stone hinder him? No more can these walls of flesh and blood hinder him a moment from sanctifying you throughout. He can just as easily save you from all sin in the body, as out of the body.

"But has he promised, thus to save us from sin, while we are in the body?" Undoubtedly he has: for a promise is implied in every commandment of GOD: consequently in that, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*. For this and every other commandment is given, not to the dead, but to the living. It is also expressed in the words above recited, That we should *walk in holiness before him all the days of our life*.

I have dwelt the longer on this, because it is the grand argument of those who oppose salvation from sin: and also, because it has not been so frequently and so fully answered: whereas



whereas the arguments taken from scripture, have been answered a hundred times over.

12. But a still more plausible objection remains, taken from experience ; which is, That there are no living witnesses of this salvation from sin. In answer to this I allow,

1. That there are not many : even in this sense, there are *not many fathers*. Such is our hardness of heart, such our slowness to believe what both the prophets and apostles have spoke, that there are few, exceeding few true witnesses of the great salvation.

I allow, 2. That there are false witnesses, who either deceive their own souls, and speak of the things they know not : or *speak lies in hypocrisy*. And I have frequently wondered, that we have not more of both sorts. It is nothing strange, that men of warm imaginations should deceive themselves in this matter. Many do the same with regard to justification : they imagine they are justified, and are not. But though many imagine it falsely, yet there are some that are truly justified. And thus, though many imagine they are sanctified, and are not, yet there are some that are really sanctified. I allow, 3dly, That some who once enjoyed full salvation, have now totally lost it. They once walked in glorious liberty, giving GOD their whole heart, *rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks*. But it is past. They now are shorn of their strength, and become like other men. Perhaps they do not give up their confidence ; they still have a sense of his pardoning love. But even this is frequently assaulted by doubts and fears, so that they hold it with a trembling hand.

13. “ Nay this (say some pious and sensible men) is the very thing which we contend for. We grant, it may please GOD, to make some of his children for a time unspeakably holy and happy. We will not deny, that they may enjoy all the holiness and happiness which you speak of. But it is only *for a time* : GOD never designed, that it should continue to their lives’ end. Consequently sin is only suspended : it is not destroyed.”

This

This you affirm. But it is a thing of so deep importance, that it cannot be allowed without clear and cogent proof. And where is the proof? We know that in general *the gifts and callings of GOD are without repentance*. He does not repent of any gifts which he hath bestowed upon the children of men. And how does the contrary appear, with regard to this particular gift of GOD? Why should we imagine, that he will make an exception, with respect to the most precious of all his gifts on this side heaven? Is he not as able to give it us always, as to give it once? as able to give it for fifty years, as for one day? and how can it be proved, that he is not willing to continue this his loving-kindness? How is this supposition, that he is not willing, consistent with the positive assertion of the apostle? Who after exhorting the Christians at *Thessalonica*, and in them all Christians in all ages, *to rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks*, immediately adds (as if on purpose to answer those, who denied, not the power, but the will of GOD to work this in them) *For this is the will of GOD concerning you in Christ Jesus*. Nay, and it is remarkable, that after he had delivered that glorious promise (such it properly is) in the twenty third verse, *The very GOD of peace shall sanctify you wholly, and the whole of you* (so it is in the original) *the spirit, the soul, and the body, shall be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ*: he adds again, *Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it*. He will not only sanctify you wholly, but will preserve you in that state, until he comes to receive you unto himself.

14. Agreeably to this, is the plain matter of fact. Several persons have enjoyed this blessing, without any interruption for many years. Several enjoy it at this day. And not a few have enjoyed it unto their death, as they have declared with their latest breath; calmly witnessing, that GOD had saved them from all sin, till their spirit returned to GOD.

15. As to the whole head of objections taken from experience, I desire it may be observed farther, either the persons



sons objected to, have attained Christian perfection, or they have not. If they have not, whatever objections are brought against them, strike wide of the mark. For they are not the persons we are talking of: therefore whatever they are or do, is beside the question. But if they have attained it, if they answer the description given under the nine preceding articles, no reasonable objection can lie against them. They are superior to all censure. And *every tongue that riseth up against them, will they utterly condemn.*

16. "But I never saw one" (continues the objector) "that answered my idea of perfection." It may be so. And it is probable (as I observed elsewhere) you never will. For your idea includes abundantly too much: even freedom from those infirmities, which are not separable from a spirit that is connected with flesh and blood. But if you keep to the account that is given above, and allow for the weakness of human understanding, you may see at this day undeniable instances of genuine, scriptural perfection.

III. 1. It only remains, in the third place, to expostulate a little with the opposers of this perfection.

Now permit me to ask, Why are you so angry with those who profess to have attained this? and so mad (I cannot give it any softer title) against Christian perfection? against the most glorious gift which GOD ever gave to the children of men upon earth? View it in every one of the preceding points of light, and see what it contains that is either odious or terrible: that is calculated to excite either hatred or fear, in any reasonable creature.

What rational objection can you have, to the loving the Lord your GOD with all your heart? Why should you have any aversion to it? Why should you be afraid of it? Would it do you any hurt? Would it lessen your happiness, either in this world or the world to come? And why should you be unwilling, that others should give him their whole heart? Or that they should love their neighbours as themselves? Yea, *as Christ hath loved us?* Is this detestable? Is it the proper object of hatred? Or is it not the most amiable thing  
under

under the sun? Is it proper to move terror? Is it not rather desirable in the highest degree?

2. Why are you so averse to having in you the whole *mind which was in Christ Jesus*? All the affections, all the tempers and dispositions which were in him, while he dwelt among men? Why should you be afraid of this? Would it be any worse for you, were GOD to work in you this very hour, all the mind that was in him? If not, why should you hinder others from seeking this blessing? Or be displeased at those who think they have attained it? Is any thing more lovely? Any thing more to be desired by every child of man?

3. Why are you averse to having the whole *fruit of the Spirit*? Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness: fidelity, goodness, temperance? Why should you be afraid of having all these planted in your inmost soul? As *against these there is no law*, so there cannot be any reasonable objection. Surely nothing is more desirable, than that all these tempers should take deep root in your heart: nay, in the hearts of all that name the name of Christ: yea, of all the inhabitants of the earth.

4. What reason have you to be afraid of, or to entertain any aversion to, the being *renewed in the whole image of him that created you*? Is not this more desirable than any thing under heaven? Is it not consummately amiable? What can you wish for in comparison of this, either for your own soul, or for those for whom you entertain the strongest and tenderest affection? And when you enjoy this, what remains, but to be *changed from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord*?

5. Why should you be averse to universal holiness? The same thing under another name. Why should you entertain any prejudice against this, or look upon it with apprehension, whether you understand by that term the being inwardly conformed to the whole image and will of God; or an outward behaviour, in every point suitable to that conformity? Can you conceive any thing more amiable than this? Any thing more desirable? Set prejudice aside, and surely you will desire to see it diffused over all the earth.



6. Is perfection (to vary the expression) the being *sanctified throughout in spirit, soul and body*? What lover of GOD and man can be averse to this, or entertain frightful apprehensions of it? Is it not in your best moments your desire to be all of a piece? All consistent with yourself? "All faith, all meekness, and all love?" And suppose you were once possessed of this glorious liberty, would not you wish to continue therein? To be preserved *blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*?

7. For what cause should you that are children of GOD, be averse to or afraid of presenting yourselves, your souls and bodies, as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to GOD? to GOD your creator, your redeemer, your sanctifier? Can any thing be more desirable than this entire self-dedication to him? And is it not your wish that all mankind should unite in this *reasonable service*? Surely no one can be averse to this, without being an enemy to all mankind.

8. And why should you be afraid of or averse to what is naturally implied in this? Namely, the offering up all our thoughts, and words, and actions, as a spiritual sacrifice to GOD, acceptable to him through the blood and intercession of his well-beloved Son? Surely you cannot deny that this is good and profitable to men, as well as pleasing to GOD. Should you not then devoutly pray, that both you and all mankind, may thus worship him in spirit and in truth?

9. Suffer me to ask one question more. Why should any man of reason and religion, be either afraid of, or averse to, salvation from all sin? Is not sin the greatest evil on this side hell? And if so, does it not naturally follow, that an entire deliverance from it is one of the greatest blessings on this side heaven? How earnestly then should it be prayed for by all the children of GOD? By sin I mean, "a voluntary transgression of a known law." Are you averse to being delivered from this? Are you afraid of such a deliverance? Do you then love sin, that you are so unwilling to part with it? Surely no. You do not love either the devil or his works. You rather wish to be totally delivered from them; to have sin rooted out both of your life and your heart.

10. I have

10. I have frequently observed, and not without surprise, that the opposers of perfection are more vehement against it when it is placed in this view, than in any other whatsoever: they will allow all you say of the love of GOD and man; of the mind which was in Christ, of the fruit of the Spirit, of the image of GOD, of universal holiness, of entire self-dedication, of sanctification in spirit, soul, and body: yea, and of the offering up all our thoughts, words, and actions, as a sacrifice to GOD. All this they will allow, so we will allow sin, a little sin, to remain in us till death.

11. Pray compare this with that remarkable passage in *John Bunyan's Holy War*. When *Immanuel*, says he, had driven *Diabolus* and all his forces out of the city of *Manfoul*, *Diabolus* preferred a petition to *Immanuel*, that he might have only a small part of the city. When this was rejected, he begged to have only a little room within the walls. But *Immanuel* answered, "He should have no place in it at all, no, not to rest the sole of his foot."

Had not the good old man forgot himself? Did not the force of truth so prevail over him here, as utterly to overturn his own system? To assert perfection in the clearest manner? For if this is not salvation from sin, I cannot tell what is.

12. "No," says a great man, "this is the error of errors: I hate it from my heart. I pursue it through all the world with fire and sword." Nay, why so vehement? Do you seriously think there is no error under heaven equal to this? Here is something which I cannot understand. Why are those that oppose salvation from sin, few excepted, so eager? I had almost said furious? Are you fighting *pro aris & focis*? For GOD and your country? For all you have in the world? For all that is near and dear unto you? For your liberty? Your life? In GOD's name, why are you so fond of sin? What good has it ever done you? What good is it ever likely to do, either in this world or in the world to come? And why are you so violent against those that hope for deliverance from it? Have patience with us, if we are in an error:

yea,



yea, suffer us to enjoy our error. If we should not attain it, the very expectation of this deliverance gives us present comfort : Yea, and ministers strength, to resist those enemies which we expect to conquer. If you could persuade us to despair of that victory, we should give over the contest. Now we *are saved by hope* : from this very hope a degree of salvation springs. Be not angry at those who are

*Felices errore suo :*

Happy in their mistake. Else, be their opinion right or wrong, your temper is undeniably sinful : bear then with *us*, as we do with *you* : and see whether the Lord will not deliver us ? Whether he is not able, yea, and willing to save them to the uttermost that come unto GOD through him ?

*Tunbridge-Wells, Dec. 6, 1784.*



THE EXPERIENCE OF

ELIZABETH JACKSON.

June 18, 1764.

**I** Am not understood, for want of knowing how to explain myself. This causes some to say, my experience is not scriptural, because I have no complaints. But I know, I am approved of GOD every moment. I find my nature is changed ; my heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience, and cleansed from all unrighteousness. GOD has washed me with pure water, and I find, all I do or say is sanctified. But when I say, I am perfectly happy, lacking nothing, many are offended. They ask me if I want no more faith : and I know not how to answer them. But I feel the atoning blood of Christ applied to me every moment. This causes my joys to flow as a river, and makes me rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks.

I find

I find my soul in one continual flame. I have liberty of spirit : Christ has freed me from every entanglement below : Christ sits on my heart, and feeds my soul, and consumes all my enemies. I find nothing within, but a sweet serenity and harmony of love. My rest is in GOD : my heart is stayed, and my life is one continual looking up to him. The Spirit is quick and powerful, and testifies that the work is finished. My evidence of it is as clear as the sun in the firmament. I see myself and my performances less than nothing ; but GOD looks upon me in Christ. I find “ my every act, word, thought, is love.” My every breath ascends to the throne of grace, and returns pure to my heart. My soul is watered every moment : the Spirit ascendeth and descendeth, and ceaseth not. My heart is as wax before the fire, ready to be dissolved and be no more. The glorious weight of the power of GOD shakes this earthly tabernacle. Every sinew is as unstrung : every cord unloosed : my body stands as in a totter. A little more of the fire of GOD’s love, and it will drive the spirit hence. I thirst for nothing but to see GOD. Yet my joys increase and abound, and are maintained every moment, I know not how ; only it is by faith in the Son of GOD. He is ever with me ; therefore nothing discomposes my mind ; but should he withdraw, I should faint. For I have no strength : and I rely on nothing but the promises of GOD : who, I believe, *has* saved my soul, and *will* save me for ever.



## AN EXTRACT

Of the Revd. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 339.]

**I**N the evening, while I was declaring that Jesus Christ had given himself a ransom for all, three persons almost at once, sunk down as dead, having all their sins set in array before them. But in a short time they were raised up, and knew that *the Lamb of GOD who taketh away the sin of the world*, had taken away their sins.

Sunday 13. I began expounding in the morning, the xiiiith chapter of the first epistle to the *Corinthians*. At *Hannam* I farther explained the promise given by faith; as I did also at *Rose-green*. At *Clifton* it pleased GOD to assist me greatly, in speaking on those words, *He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whoso drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: But the water which I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.*

My ordinary employment (in public) was now as follows: Every morning I read prayers and preached at *Newgate*. Every evening I expounded a portion of scripture, at one, or more of the societies. On *Monday* in the afternoon I preached abroad near *Bristol*; on *Tuesday* at *Bath* and *Two-mile hill* alternately. On *Wednesday* at *Baptist-mills*. Every other *Thursday* near *Pennsford*. Every other *Friday* in another part of *Kingswood*. On *Saturday* in the afternoon and *Sunday* morning, in the *Bowling-green* (which lies near the middle of the city.) On *Sunday* at eleven near *Hannam-Mount*. At two at *Clifton*, and at five on *Rose-green*. And hitherto, as my day is, so my strength hath been.

*Tuesday* 15. As I was expounding in the *Back-lane*, on the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, many who had before been righteous in their own eyes, abhorred themselves

themselves as in dust and ashes. But two, who seemed to be more deeply convinced than the rest, did not long sorrow as men without hope; but found in that hour, that they had *an advocate with the Father*, Jesus Christ the righteous: As did three others in *Gloucester-lane* the evening before, and three at *Baldwin-street* this evening. About ten, two who after having seen a great light, had again reasoned themselves into darkness, came to us heavy laden. We cried to GOD, and they were again *filled with peace and joy in believing*.

*Wednesday 16.* While I was declaring at *Baptist-mills*, He was wounded for our transgressions, a middle aged man began violently beating his breast, and crying to him *by whose stripes we are healed*. During our prayer, GOD put a new song in his mouth. Some mocked, and others owned the hand of GOD. Particularly a woman of *Baptist-mills*, who was now convinced of her own want of an advocate with GOD, and went home full of anguish, but was in a few hours filled with joy, knowing he had *blotted out all her transgressions*.

[Continued at page 435.]

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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER,

[Continued from page 348.]

5. **T**HE proposal was as follows. "Our national depravity turns greatly on these two hinges, The profanation of the Lord's day, and the neglect of the education of children. Till some way is found of stopping up these two great inlets of wickedness, we must expect to see our workhouses filled with aged parents, forsaken by their prodigal children, with wives forsaken by their faithless husbands, and with the wretched offspring of lewd women, and  
drunken



drunken men. Nay, we may expect to see the gaols and even the gallows largely stocked (to the perpetual reproach of our nation) with unhappy wretches, ready to fall a sacrifice to the laws of their country. "It is a common observation (says Dr. Gibson, late bishop of London) that public criminals, when they come to their unhappy end, and make their dying declarations to the world, generally charge the sinful courses in which they have lived, to the *neglect and abuse of the Lord's day*, as the first occasion of leading them into all other wickedness. And considering how frequently these declarations are repeated, and how many other instances of the same kind, though less public, are notorious enough to those who will observe them; they may well be a warning to us, to consider a religious observance of the Lord's day as the best preservative of virtue and religion, and the neglect and profanation of it as the greatest inlet to vice and wickedness."

6. "A pious clergyman farther observes, The want of education in children, is one of the principal causes of the misery of families, cities and nations; ignorance, vice and misery being constant companions. The hardest heart must melt at the melancholy sight of such a number of children, both male and female, who live in gross ignorance and habitual profanation of the Lord's day. What crowds fill the streets and fields, tempting each other to idleness, lewdness, and every other species of wickedness? Is it any wonder we should have so many undutiful children, unfaithful apprentices, disobedient servants, untrusty workmen, disloyal subjects, and bad members of society? Whence so much rapine, fornication and blasphemy? Do not all these evils center in *ignorance and contempt of the Lord's day*? And shall we do nothing to check these growing evils?"

7. "Persons concerned for the welfare of the next generation, and well-wishers to church and state, have already set us a fair example in *Stroud, Gloucester, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Bristol*, and many country parishes. They have attempted to remedy these evils by setting up Sunday-schools, which by keeping children from corrupting one another,

ther, by promoting their attendance on divine worship, and by planting the first principles of useful knowledge in their minds and of piety in their hearts, bid fair for a public reformation of their manners, and for nipping in the bud the ignorance and impiety which is every where so common among the lower and more numerous classes of people."

8. The proposals concerning Sunday-schools in the parish of *Madeley*, were as follows:

I. It is proposed, That Sunday-schools be set up in this parish, for such children as are employed all the week, and for those whose education has been hitherto totally neglected.

II. That the children admitted into these, be taught reading, writing, and the principles of religion.

III. That there be a school for boys and another for girls, in *Madeley*, *Madeley-Wood*, and *Coalbrook-Dale*, six in all..

IV. That a subscription be opened, to pay each teacher one shilling per Sunday, and to buy tables, forms, books, pens and ink.

V. That two treasurers be appointed to ask and receive the contributions of the subscribers.

VI. That whoever subscribes one guinea a year shall be a governor.

VII. That three or four inspectors be appointed, who are to visit the schools once a week, to see that the children attend regularly, and the masters do their duty.

VIII. That a book be provided, for setting down all receipts and expences; and another, for the names of the teachers and the scholars.

IX. That the schools be solemnly visited once or twice a year: and a premium given to the children that have made the greatest improvement.

9. As to the success of his unwearied labours, although he was much discouraged when he first returned from abroad, finding so many of those who had once run well, grown weary and faint in their mind: yet it was not long before he found fresh cause to rejoice, and to know, that GOD was with him of a truth. It was not long before he ob-



served that a general reformation had taken place in the parish. And it was not only an outward reformation, even of many that had been notorious for all manner of wickedness, but an inward also; many, both young and old, having learned to worship *GOD in spirit and in truth*. A considerable number of these still mourn, as sheep bereaved of their shepherd. And yet one cannot doubt, but a still larger company of his own children have hailed him on the celestial shore. But the season is coming, when all secrets shall be laid open; and all the jewels of his crown shall be made manifest in that day.

10. One instance of the success of his ministry he mentioned some years since at *Bristol*. "One Sunday," said he, "when I had done reading prayers at *Madeley*, I went up into the pulpit, intending to preach a sermon, which I had prepared for that purpose. But my mind was so confused, that I could not recollect either my text or any part of my sermon. I was afraid I should be obliged to come down without saying any thing. But having recollected myself a little, I thought I would say something on the first lesson, which was the third chapter of *Daniel*, containing the account of the three children cast into the fiery furnace: I found in doing it such an extraordinary assistance from *GOD*, and such a peculiar enlargement of heart, that I supposed there must be some peculiar cause for it. I therefore desired, if any of the congregation found any thing particular, they would acquaint me with it in the ensuing week.

"In consequence of this, the Wednesday after, a woman came, and gave me the following account. I have been for some time much concerned about my soul; I have attended the church at all opportunities, and have spent much time in private prayer. At this my husband (who is a butcher) has been exceedingly enraged, and threatened me severely what he would do, if I did not leave off going to *John Fletcher's* church: yea, if I dared to go any more to any religious meetings, whatsoever. When I told him, I could not in conscience refrain from going, at least to our parish church, he grew quite outrageous, and swore dreadfully

fully, if I went any more, he would cut my throat as soon as I came home. This made me cry mightily to GOD, that he would support me in the trying hour. And though I did not feel any great degree of comfort, yet having a sure confidence in GOD, I determined to go on in my duty, and leave the event to him. Last Sunday, after many struggles with the devil and my own heart, I came down stairs ready for church. My husband asked me, whether I was resolved to go thither? I told him I was. Well then, said he, I shall not (as I intended) cut your throat, but I will heat the oven and throw you into it, the moment you come home. Notwithstanding this threatening, which he enforced with many bitter oaths, I went to church, praying all the way, that GOD would strengthen me to suffer whatever might befall me. While you were speaking of the three children whom *Nebuchadnezzar* cast into the burning fiery furnace, I found it all belonged to *me*, and GOD applied every word to my heart. And when the sermon was ended, I thought, if I had a thousand lives, I could lay them all down for GOD. I felt my whole soul so filled with his love, that I hastened home fully determined to give myself to whatsoever GOD pleased: nothing doubting, but that either he would take me to heaven, if he suffered me to burn to death, or that he would some way deliver me, even as he did his three *servants that trusted in him*. When I got almost to our own door, I saw the flames issuing out of the mouth of the oven. And I expected nothing else, but that I should be thrown into it immediately. I felt my heart rejoice, that if it were so, the will of the Lord would be done. I opened the door, and to my utter astonishment saw my husband upon his knees, wrestling with GOD in prayer for the forgiveness of his sins. He caught me in his arms, earnestly begged my pardon, and has continued diligently seeking GOD ever since. I now know why my sermon was taken from me, namely, that GOD might thus magnify his mercy."

11. Many were the dangers he went through in the course of his ministry; but the Lord delivered him out of all.



all. One of these Mrs. *Fletcher* relates in the following words.

“ My husband having appointed to preach one Sunday at a church about fourteen miles off, I felt some concern for his riding so far, and doing the whole Sunday’s duty twice: especially as it was necessary for him to return home the same night. The evening being exceeding dark and wet, I was strongly led to commend him to GOD in prayer. While I was doing this, it was suggested to me, that his horse was fallen, and had thrown him over his head: and the whole scene appeared to be clearly represented before my eyes. “ My GOD,” said I, “ he is thine. His life, his limbs, his health are all thine! I commit him to thee by faith.” Immediately that word was impressed on my heart, *The righteous is in the hand of the Lord: and there shall no evil touch him.* And it filled my soul with such a sweetness, that I could feel no fear. The night was uncommonly bad, which occasioned many friends to continue with me. And while they expressed their great uneasiness at his staying two hours longer than we could well account for, I was obliged to hide the calmness I felt by silence, lest some should have supposed it insensibility.\* At last he came well, and praising GOD; but asked for water to wash himself, because his horse had fallen, and thrown him with great force over his head. Yet, glory be to GOD, he was no way hurt, except having a little skin grazed from one of his fingers. As he set the Lord always before him, so he found his help in every time of need.”

12. The laying the foundation of the Sunday-schools at *Madeley*, was the last public work in which he was employed. But as the liberal man is ever devising liberal things, he had several plans in his mind for preserving a great number of desolate children, brought up only to beg and steal. Such this populous parish, (and indeed most others) afford in great abundance. He had likewise proposed writing va-

\* Nay, I would have proclaimed it aloud, giving the glory to GOD, for the comfort of all that were present.

rious little tracts\* for the use of the schools. But he who cannot err, saw good to call his servant hence to *enjoy*, rather than leave him here to *do* and *suffer*.

## C H A P. IX.

### *His Character.*

1. **I** Am sensible, it is the method of almost all writers, to place the character of a man at the conclusion of his life. But there seems to be a particular reason for varying from the usual practice in this place. The death of Mr. *Fletcher* (hardly to be paralleled in the present century) was so uncommon a display of the power and goodness of GOD in behalf of his highly favoured servant, that it is not proper for any thing to come after it. It must needs therefore close the whole account.

2. From even the imperfect account, which has been given of this great and good man, any discerning person may with very little difficulty extract his character. In general, it is easy to perceive, that a more excellent man has not appeared in the church for many ages. It is true, in several ages, and in several countries, many men have excelled in particular virtues and graces. But who can point out in any age or nation, one that so highly excelled in all? One that was enabled in so large a measure to *put on the whole armour of GOD*? Yea, so to *put on Christ*, as to *perfect holiness in the fear of GOD*.

3. Yet there is a peculiar difficulty in giving a full account of either his life or character, because we have scarce any light from himself. He was upon all occasions very uncommonly reserved in speaking of himself, whether in writing or conversation. He hardly ever said any thing concerning himself, unless it slipped from him unawares. And among the great number of papers which he has left,  
there

\* I do not regret his not writing those tracts: because I despair of seeing any in the English tongue superior to those tracts from *Abbe Fleury* and Mr. *Poiret*, published under the title of "Instructions for children." I have never yet seen any thing comparable to them, either for depth of sense, or plainness of language.



there is scarce a page, (except that singular account of his conversion to GOD) relative either to his own inward experience, or the transactions of his life. So that the most of the information we have, is gathered up, either from short hints scattered up and down in his letters, from what he had occasionally dropped among his friends, or from what one and another remembered concerning him. Herein he did not attend to that wise remark of the ancient writers, (exactly agreeable to various passages that occur in the canonical scriptures) *It is good to conceal the secrets of a king, but to declare the loving-kindness of the Lord.*

4. This defect was indeed in some measure supplied, by the intire intimacy which subsisted between him and Mrs. Fletcher. He did not willingly, much less designedly, conceal any thing from her. They had no secrets with regard to each other, but had indeed one house, one purse, and one heart. Before her it was his invariable rule, *to think aloud*: always to open the window in his breast. And to this we are indebted for the knowledge of many particulars, which must otherwise have been buried in oblivion.

5. But whatever the materials were, however compleat our informations, yet I am thoroughly sensible of my own inability to draw such a portrait as Mr. Fletcher deserves. I have no turn at all for panegyric: I have never accustomed myself to it. It gives me therefore no small satisfaction to find, that this is in a great measure done to my hands. The picture is already drawn; and that by no mean pencil. All then which I shall attempt is, to retouch Mrs. Fletcher's observations, and now and then to add a few articles, either from my own knowledge or from the information of others.

9. The following are mostly her own words, for where they are clear and expressive, as they generally are, I do not think it right to alter them for altering sake.

"Whatever he might be with regard to *charity*, said she, he was no less eminent for his spirit of *faith*. Indeed he was not so much led by sights or impressions (which many mistake for faith) as abundance of people have been; but by a steady,

a steady, firm reliance upon the love and truth and faithfulness of GOD. His ardent desire was, so to believe, as to be a partaker of all the great and precious promises : to be a witness of all that mind which was in Christ Jesus. And being conscious that he must be crucified with his Master, or never reign with him, he gave himself up to him, whom he continually set before him, to lie in his hand as the passive clay. He would often say, ‘ It is my business in all events, to hang upon the Lord, with a sure trust and confidence that he will order all things in the best time and manner. Indeed it would be nothing to be a believer, nay, in truth, there would be no room for faith, if every thing were seen here. But against hope to believe in hope, to have a full confidence in that unseen power, which so mightily supports us in all our dangers and difficulties, this is the believing which is acceptable to GOD.’ Sometimes when I have expressed some apprehension of an approaching trial, he would answer, I do not doubt but the Lord orders all : therefore I leave every thing to him. In outward dangers, if they were ever so great, he seemed to know no shadow of fear. When I was speaking once concerning a danger, to which we were then particularly exposed, he answered, I know GOD always gives his angels charge concerning us : therefore we are equally safe every where.

Not less eminent than his faith was his *humility*. Amidst all his laying himself out for GOD, and for the good of souls, he ever preserved that special grace, the making no account of his own labours. He held himself and his own abilities in very low esteem ; and seemed to have that word continually before his eyes, “ I am an unprofitable servant.” And this *humility* was so rooted in him, as to be moved by no affront. I have seen many, even of the most provoking kind, offered him ; but he received them as his *proper portion* : being so far from desiring the honour which cometh of men, that he took pleasure in being little and unknown. Perhaps it might appear from some passages of his life, that in this he even leaned to an extreme. For genuine humility does not require, that any man should *desire to be despised*. Nay



we are to avoid it, so far as we possibly can, consistently with a good conscience; for that direction, *Let no man despise thee*, concerns every man as well as *Timothy*.

“ It is rare to meet with an eminent person that can bear an equal. But it was his choice and delight, to prefer every one to himself. And this he did in so free and easy a manner, that in him it appeared perfectly natural. He never willingly suffered any unkindness shewn to him to be mentioned again; and if it was, he generally answered, “ O let it drop; we will offer it in silence to the Lord.” And indeed the best way of bearing crosses, is to consecrate all in silence to GOD.

“ From this root of humility sprung such a *patience*, as I wish I could either describe or imitate. It produced in him a most ready mind, which embraced every cross with alacrity and pleasure. For the good of his neighbour, nothing seemed hard, nothing wearisome. Sometimes I have been grieved to call him out of his study two or three times in an hour: especially when he was engaged in composing some of his deepest works. But he would answer, with his usual sweetness, “ O my dear, never think of that. It matters not, if we are but always ready to meet the will of GOD.” It is conformity to the will of GOD that alone makes an employment excellent. He never thought any thing too mean, but sin; he looked on nothing else as beneath his character. If he overtook a poor man or woman on the road with a burden too heavy for them, he did not fail to offer his assistance to bear part of it. And he would not easily take a denial. This therefore he has frequently done.

“ In bearing pain he was most exemplary, and continued more and more so to the last. Nor in the most humbling part of the ministry, was his coming down to the capacities of the ignorant the least excellency. Nevertheless he had a most resolute courage in the reproof of sin. To daring sinners he was a son of thunder; and no worldly considerations were regarded, whenever he believed GOD had given him a message to deliver to any of them.

[Continued at page 443.]

The JOURNAL of FRANCIS ASBURY, *Bishop of the  
Methodist-Episcopal Church.*

From March 26, 1772, to April 14, 1773.

(Continued from page 354.)

**T**UESDAY 29. At Mr. *Sinclair's*, found great peace of mind, and, thanks be to GOD, had power in preaching, though the people were dead and stupid. The next day at Mr. *Chamberlain's*, I had many people, and preached with freedom; then went to *Galloway's*, where we had great consolation.

January 1, 1773. My body has been weak for some time, but my mind has enjoyed a good degree of peace; and I have a strong desire to be kept in the meekness of Jesus Christ. My heart has been affected by reading, lately, part of *Sewel's* history of the Quakers. How great was the spirit of persecution in *New-England*, when some were imprisoned, some had their ears cut off, and some were hanged! O that our GOD would arise, and bow the nations to himself!

January 2. After preaching to several people, at *John Murray's*, a new place, then rode back to Mr. *Colegate's*, and preached in the evening.

January 3. Rode to *Baltimore* and had a large congregation at the house of Captain *Patten*, at the *Point*. Many of the principal people were there; and the Lord enabled me to speak with freedom and power. At night, I preached in town. The house was well filled with people, and we have a comfortable hope the work of the Lord will revive in this place. Bless the Lord, O ye saints! Holiness is the element of my soul. My earnest prayer is, that nothing contrary to holiness may live in me.

Monday 4. Rode to *S. Stevenson's*, found life in my soul, and was much affected in preaching to the people. Then met and regulated the class. Tuesday 5. They were kind enough to offer me the court-house in town; but judging



it unfit, I preached in another house; then met the society and settled a class of men. Wed. 6. We had a pretty good gathering at *N. P—'s*, about 6 miles from town. Then rode back to town, and after preaching with comfort in the evening, I formed a class of women.

Thursday 7. Rose with a determination to live more to GOD. Preached twice in the country, met two classes and settled them as well as I could. The class at Mr. *Simms's* were lively and had the power of GOD among them. They were the fruit of *Nathan P—'s* labours, and many of them could give a good account of their experience.

Friday 8. My mind is fixed on GOD. I both desire and purpose to exercise fasting, prayer and faith. After some exercise of mind, the Lord enabled me to preach with life and power at Mr. *Merryman's*, from these words, *Be not ye partakers with them*. I shewed First, whom the words were spoken to. Secondly, with whom they were not to be partakers. Thirdly, how they were not to partake with them, viz. In spirit—in judgment—in practice.

Lord's day, *January 10*. Many people attended at *Joseph Presbury's*, to whom I preached twice, with some life, and then went 3 miles into the Neck; and felt much power while preaching on perfect love. The more I speak on this subject, the more my soul is filled and drawn out in love. This doctrine has a great tendency to prevent people from settling on their lees.

Monday 11. Preached with great plainness to many people at *Daniel Ruff's*, and then rode to Mr. *Dellam's*.

Tuesday 12. Rode to *Moses Brown's*, but as they had no previous notice, we collected but few. However, I preached, and afterwards returned to Mr. *Dellam's*, and preached to his family.

Thursday 13. It was late before I reached *Samuel Litten's*, and as there was much rain and snow, the company was small. Young Doctor *A—s* took me home with him. The young man, with his sister and mother seemed tender, but his father appeared to be a stiff old man, and I did by no means like his spirit.

Friday

Friday 14. Many people attended preaching at *S. F—'s*. I was shut up in speaking, but found peace in my mind, and afterwards rode home with friend *Preston*.

Saturday 15. This morning, I rose to glorify GOD, with a determination to do his will, and that only; to be wholly devoted to the Lord, in spirit, soul and body. Many people came to hear the word of life to-day, though it was very cold.

Lord's day 16. Preaching to-day, at friend *Preston's*, on the barren fig-tree, I first shewed that it was applicable to the Jews, and secondly to the Protestant church; at the same time described the barren fig-tree as—one without leaves—or, one without blossoms—or, one without fruit—or, one that did not bear so much fruit as another might bear.—I then rode to *J. Dellam's*, and preached to his family with a few others. On Monday, but few people attended at *Bond's*; and in the evening I preached at Mr. *Duke's*, but was shut up. The next day many country-people came to hear the word at *Joppa*, though but few from the town. There are about forty houses in this town, and it stands on a neck of land near the water; but the people seem to be buried in trade, sensuality and superstition.

Wednesday 19. The weather being cold, there were but few at *James Baker's*; nevertheless I preached and found peace, power and love—If Israel be not gathered, yet I hope to be the Lord's.

Tuesday 20. After preaching with liberty at Mr. *Chamberlain's*, I went to *Aquilla Galloway's*, and found life in preaching there. The next day, at *John Murray's*, I preached to a stupid company, and then rode to *John Colegate's*, where I was favoured with liberty in dispensing the blessed word. My soul felt life also in the evening at *Joshua Owen's*. How pleasant and profitable it is to feel spiritual life in public exercises! Saturday I rode to *Baltimore* and had a large congregation.

Lord's day 23. I preached twice at the *Point*, and once in town. On Monday my heart felt great sorrow. This day



day I wrote to my mother, and in the evening found great consolation.

Tuesday 25. My mind was wholly given up to GOD, and I have a great hope that the gospel will yet spread in this town. On Wednesday there was a moving among the people while I preached at *Nathan Perrigo's*; and afterwards returning to town, preached in the evening. On Thursday I felt power and life in my soul, while preaching to a large number of people at Mr. *Gatch's*. On Friday I preached in the Neck and at *Joppa*.

Saturday 29. Perceiving the great wickedness of the people who were swearing and drinking in a tavern, great struggles arose in my mind about preaching there; however, I broke through every difficulty, and felt both life and power in dispensing the word among them.

Lord's day 30. This was a day of power and comfort. I rode to *Joseph Presbury's*, preached three times and met the classes. Many of the people, through grace, were able to give a good account of their experience.

February 1. Was favoured with freedom in preaching to a number of people at *Daniel Ruff's*; and my mind has been kept in purity and peace.

Tuesday 2. Was greatly assisted in preaching to-day, both at *Swan-Creek* and Mr. *Dellam's*. The next morning I breakfasted with *Richard Dellam*, and found that he was very fond of Mr. *Law's* works. He treated me with great kindness. After preaching and meeting the society at the ferry, I went to *J. G——'s*, a man much talked of for his overreaching and unjust dealing; but what he is I know not. In principle he appeared to be a *Quaker*. He was much troubled with the gout, which he told me his father had before him. He said, his father cured himself of the gout by milk and moderate diet; but threw himself into a dropsy. On Thursday, after preaching at *Deer-Creek*, I rode to *B. Preston's*. My present purpose is to put all the people who are fit for it into bands.

Friday 5. Many people attended at *Forward's*, and my soul was alive in preaching to them. I then rode back

to *B. Preston's*, and put the people into bands as I had designed.

Saturday 6. My mind was calm and serene this morning. I preached with some power, and we had a comfortable meeting. *William Duke*, a lad about 16 or 17 years of age, exhorted the people. He seems to be a promising youth, and I gave him a licence to exhort.

Lord's day 7. Some great critics attended at the preaching-house to-day, but I preached twice, and spoke freely.

Monday 8. Though the weather was very cold, I went to *William Bond's*, and enforced on a dull congregation, these awful words of our Lord, *What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul.* I went afterwards to the widow *Bond's*, and spoke closely to the girls, who appeared to be somewhat serious.

Tuesday 9. After preaching to more people than usual at *Aquilla Stamford's*, I went to *Baker's* in the evening, and both met the class and formed some bands. I also gave them a copy of the proper deed for securing their preaching-house.

Wednesday 10. I went to *C—'s* and preached. This perhaps will be the last time, for it is a disorderly house. I then went to *Aquilla Galloway's*, and preached with some comfort. There is room to hope that the Lord will do something for the people here.

Thursday 11. The congregation was large at *John Murray's*, and I preached with plainness and power, so that the sleepy people seemed to awake. I then went back to *Colegate's*, and preached with some satisfaction; but Satan was close at my heels; however, the Lord gave me power to resist him.

Friday 12. The Lord enables me to stand fast in the midst of temptations. My soul possesses inward and spiritual power. Many people attended preaching to-day at *Joshua Owen's*; I afterwards met the class, and then gave an exhortation in the evening.

Lord's day 14. Many country people came to hear the word of GOD at the *Point*; some came 12 miles before those



those of the town had left their houses; perhaps before some of them had left their beds. I found some life and power in preaching both at the *Point* and in *Baltimore*.

Monday 15. Rose this morning with holy thoughts of GOD; and we had a good time in public worship.

Wednesday 17. I preached and met the society; and employed Mr. *Moreton* to draw up a deed for the house in *Gun-powder Neck*.

Thursday 18. Preached with power, both at *Nathan Perrigo's* and Mr. *Gatch's*.

Friday 19. A few people attended at Mr. *Merryman's*; going afterwards about 4 miles to Mr. *D—'s*, I preached and met the society; most of them appeared to be under a good work of grace.

Lord's day 21. The weather was excessively severe, yet many people came to hear the word at *J. Prestbury's*. I rode about 6 or 7 miles to preach in the *Neck*, but never felt colder weather. The water froze as it run from the horse's nostrils; and a friend said, the water froze as it came from his eyes. However, after preaching to a few people, I returned.

Monday 22. I had 16 miles to ride to preach to a few people, and 5 more to *Josiah Dellam's* to get my dinner. I have suffered a little by lodging in open houses this cold weather, but this is a very small thing when compared to what the dear Redeemer suffered for the salvation of precious souls.

Tuesday 23. Glory to GOD! I had peace, and power, and love.

Wednesday 24. After preaching with plainness to a considerable number of people, I then went to *Josiah Dellam's*, where many people attended, and we had a comfortable time. My old opponent, Mr. *Evans*, met me here, but he did not appear so forward as he had been. I rode thence to *Rocky-run*, and preached there with satisfaction. Mr. *Giles* and his wife treated me with great kindness.

Thursday 25. I had a good time and many people at Mr. *L—'s*. Two letters came to hand to-day, one from *York*,  
and

and one from *Philadelphia*. They intreat me to return, and inform me that trouble is at hand. But I cannot fear while my heart is upright with GOD. I seek nothing but him; and fear nothing but his displeasure.

[Continued at page 453.]

## THOUGHTS *upon* METHODISM.

1. **I** AM not afraid, that the people called Methodists, should ever cease to exist either in *Europe* or *America*. But I am afraid, lest they should exist only as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case, unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit and discipline, with which they first set out.

2. What was their fundamental doctrine? That the bible was the whole and sole rule both of christian faith and practice. Hence they learned, 1. That religion is an inward principle: that it is no other than the mind that was in Christ: or in other words, the renewal of the soul after the image of GOD, in righteousness and true holiness: 2. That this can never be wrought in us, but by the power of the Holy Ghost: 3. That we receive this and every other blessing, merely for the sake of Christ; and, 4. That whoever hath the mind that was in Christ, the same is our brother, and sister, and mother.

3. In the year 1729, four young students in *Oxford*, agreed to spend their evenings together. They were all zealous members of the church of England, and had no peculiar opinions, but were distinguished only by their constant attendance on the church and sacrament. In 1735, they were increased to fifteen: when the chief of them embarked for *America*, intending to preach to the heathen *Indians*. Methodism then seemed to die away: but it revived again in the year 1738. Especially after Mr. *Wesley* (not being allowed to preach in the churches) began to preach,



preach in the fields. One and another then coming to enquire, what they must do to be saved? He desired them to meet him all together, which they did, and increased continually in number. In November, a large building, the Foundery, being offered him, he began preaching therein, morning and evening; at five in the morning, and seven in the evening, that the people's labour might not be hindered.

4. From the beginning, the men and women sat apart, as they always did in the primitive church. And none were suffered to call any place their own, but the first comers sat down first. They had no pews; and all the benches for rich and poor, were of the same construction. Mr. *Wesley* began the service with a short prayer; then sung a hymn and preached, (usually about half an hour) then sang a few verses of another hymn, and concluded with prayer. His constant doctrine was, salvation by faith, preceded by repentance, and followed by holiness.

5. But when a large number of people was joined, the great difficulty was, to keep them together. For they were continually scattering hither and thither, and we knew no way to help it. But GOD provided for this also, when we thought not of it. A year or two after, Mr. *Wesley* met the chief of the society in *Bristol*, and enquired, "How shall we pay the debt upon the preaching-house?" Captain *Foy* stood up and said, "Let every one in the society give a penny a week and it will easily be done." "But many of them," said one, "have not a penny to give." "True," said the captain, "then put ten or twelve of them to me. Let each of these give what they can weekly, and I will supply what is wanting." Many others made the same offer. So Mr. *Wesley* divided the societies among them: assigning a *class* of about twelve persons, to each of these who were termed *Leaders*.

6. Not long after one of these informed Mr. *Wesley*, that calling on such an one in his house, he found him quarrelling with his wife. Another was found in drink. It immediately struck into Mr. *Wesley's* mind, this is the  
very

very thing we wanted. The *Leaders* are the persons, who may not only receive the contributions, but also watch over the souls of their brethren. The society in *London* being informed of this, willingly followed the example of that in *Bristol*. As did every society from that time, whether in *Europe* or *America*. By this means it was easily found, if any grew weary or faint, help was speedily administered.

And if any walked disorderly, they were quickly discovered, and either amended or dismissed.

7. For those who knew in whom they had believed, there was another help provided. Five or six, either married or single men, met together at such an hour as was convenient, according to the direction of St. *James*, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." And five or six of the married or single women met together for the same purpose. Innumerable blessings have attended this institution; especially in those who were *going on to perfection*. When any seemed to have attained this, they were allowed to meet with a select number, who appeared, so far as man could judge, to be partakers of the same *great salvation*.

8. From this short sketch of Methodism (so called) any man of understanding may easily discern, that it is only plain scriptural religion, guarded by a few prudential regulations. The essence of it is holiness of heart and life: the circumstances all point to this. And as long as they are joined together in the people called Methodists, no weapon formed against them shall prosper. But if ever the circumstantial parts are despised, the essential will soon be lost. And if ever the essential parts should evaporate, what remains will be dung and dross.

9. It nearly concerns us to understand how the case stands with us at present. I fear, wherever riches have increased (exceeding few are the exceptions) the essence of religion, the mind that was in Christ, has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore I do not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and fru-



gality. And these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride, anger, and the love of the world in all its branches.

10. How then is it possible that Methodism, that is, the religion of the heart, though it flourishes now as a green bay-tree, should continue in this state? for the Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal: consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionably increase in pride, in anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away.

11. Is there no way to prevent this? This continual declension of pure religion? We ought not to forbid people to be diligent and frugal: we *must* exhort all christians, to gain all they can by honest industry, and to save all they can: that is, in effect, to grow rich. What way then (I ask again) can we take, that our money may not sink us to the nethermost hell? There is one way, and there is no other under heaven. If those who *gain all they can*, and *save all they can*, will likewise *give all they can*, then the more they gain, the more they will grow in grace, and the more they will lay up in heaven.

*London, August 4, 1786.*



*An account of Mrs. SPENCER, who died January 16, 1787.*

[Written by her late husband.]

THE Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away my dear wife. Yea, she that never gave me an angry word, nor so much as the shadow of an angry look, is now numbered among the dead! My loss is so truly great, that I am sure none but GOD can repair it. But I submit. Father, thy will be done!

Under

Under her great affliction she set such an example of patience and resignation, as is seldom seen. And as she lived so she died, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.

A little before her departure, she said, "I hear such delightful music, as is beyond the power of any mortal to describe!" and then in a rapture cried out, "See! GOD is so good, as to send his angels to take care of me! See! see! O the great goodness of GOD to me!" After this she lay still awhile, and then fell asleep in the arms of Jesus.

As to her character, it may be truly said, she was one of the excellent of the earth. She took great delight in private prayer, and often retired to pour out her soul before GOD. Her reverence for his word was such, that she seldom read it but on her knees. She frequently rose at midnight to praise GOD, be the weather cold or hot. She took great delight in visiting the sick, and the distressed, and in relieving them according to her ability: but she took care to go no where, at any time, without a probability either of getting or doing good.

I cannot recollect that she ever missed any public ordinances, be the weather ever so severe.

And as to evil-speaking, I never heard her once utter a disrespectful word of any one; and when others did, she reprov'd them in good earnest, and at the same time with the utmost meekness: saying, "Are you doing to that person what you would he should do unto you? Have you forgot what the Holy Ghost says by St. James, *Brethren, speak not evil one of another.*"

Thus she lived, and died, holy in all manner of conversation, as he who had called her is holy.

JOHN SPENCER.

Thorne, Feb. 7, 1787.

*A Short*



*A Short Account of Miss SARAH BUTLER.*

THE subject of the following observations being little known, it was not her desire that any thing should be said concerning her. But in an age when early piety is too seldom seen, whenever there is any appearance thereof, it should not be wholly overlooked, since GOD does not light a candle to put it under a bushel.

*Sarah Butler* was born in the year 1769; and though for the first eight years of her life nothing remarkable occurred; yet she passed that period in great simplicity: seldom giving her parents any uneasiness by her undutifulness.

Her religious concern began at the time Mr. *Broadbent* instructed the children weekly: which she has since mentioned with great delight.

Early in the last spring, as her disorder increased, her sense of sin increased also; which made her very earnest with GOD in seeking a sense of his favour: and it was not long before he answered her in the joy of her heart.

From the time she first knew the forgiving love of GOD, she retained such a growing confidence in him, that no suggestion of satan could shake it for any long continuance. Hence, if at any time she perceived her mother troubled, she would remind her that GOD had promised to provide for those that love and serve him: hence also arose her patience under the most violent pains which she often endured.

For the last few months of her life, she enjoyed close communion with GOD, and could approach him with a great degree of holy boldness, on all occasions.

The fear of death, for some time before her departure, was so entirely taken away, that the nearer she saw it approach, the stronger was her confidence in GOD.

The evening before her departure she spoke of the love of Christ in a manner very affecting.—“O, said she, if I was an impenitent sinner now, what would become of me! what should I do! But I am washed in the blood of Jesus, and shall soon be with him: O what a precious Saviour he is!

No

No tongue can tell how I love him for what he has done and suffered for me ! He was spit upon and crowned with thorns ! He was nailed to the cross, and at last was crucified, that I might be saved ! And glory be to his name, I am saved ! I know that my Redeemer liveth ! Come Lord Jesus ! Come quickly ! Make no delay ! O what love I feel ! And what a heaven do I behold ready to receive me ! O how I long to be gone, and leave this body, this world and all that is in it behind !"—After this she lay still awhile, and then (*May 10, 1786*) fell asleep in Jesus, having just entered the seventeenth year of her age.

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## Poetry.

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### A FUNERAL HYMN.

“ **W**HY do thy chariot-wheels delay ?”  
 The gracious suff’rer cries,  
 “ Why thus drag on ? Lord, haste away,  
 “ And bear me to the skies.”

Blest are the dead, who in the Lord  
 Their Saviour, sweetly rest ;  
 Sav’d from their toils, to bliss restor’d,  
 An heav’n in Jesu’s breast.

That bliss is thine, the struggle’s o’er,  
 Th’ unfetter’d spirit’s fled ;  
 The body, rack’d with pain no more,  
 Lies number’d with the dead.

Chasten’d by sharp affliction’s rod,  
 Faith answers, all is right ;

It



It checks the groan, and makes the load,  
Through meek submission, light.

Long in the fiery furnace try'd  
With salutary pain ;  
In suff'rings to thy Lord ally'd,  
With him triumphant reign !

GOD brought thee low, to raise thee up,  
He kill'd to make alive :  
Go, bless him for the bitt'rest cup  
Thy Saviour's love could give.

Yes, 'twas from love, from love divine,  
Thy sharpest suff'rings flow'd,  
To wean from earth their blest design,  
And fit the soul for GOD.

Behold the husband, father, friend,  
His parting blessing give :  
He lov'd his own, and to the end  
Exhorts in love to live.

But what engross'd his care supreme,  
Was *Mary's* better part :  
" Religion be your single aim,  
" Let GOD have all your heart !"

" And now, O spotless Lamb, to thee  
" My spirit I resign ;  
" To thy all-cleansing blood I flee :  
" Sweet Jesus, I am thine."

Thus may we close our days of woe,  
And quit this scene of pain ;  
Nor sigh at losing all below,  
When all above we gain.

Divinely

Divinely arm'd, we dare defy  
 The worst that death can bring :  
 O grave, where is thy victory !  
 O death, where is thy sting !



## P S A L M xlv.

**O**N GOD supreme our hope depends;  
 Whose omnipresent fight  
 Through all the pathless realms extends  
 Of uncreated night.

Plung'd in the gulph of deep distress,  
 To him we raise our cry ;  
 His mercy bids our sorrows cease,  
 And fills our tongues with joy.

Though earth her ancient seat forsake,  
 By pangs convulsive torn ;  
 Though her self-balanc'd fabric shake,  
 And troubled nature mourn :

Though hills be in the ocean lost,  
 With all their shaggy load,  
 No fear shall e'er invade the just,  
 Or shake his trust in GOD.

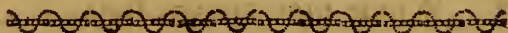
In vain th' unbottom'd wild abyss  
 Its force tumultuous pours,  
 In vain the watry legions rise  
 Loud thundering o'er the shores.

What though the frightened mountains nod  
 Shook by the rolling war ?  
 Sion secure enjoys the flood  
 Wide-wasting from afar !



The Lord most high, on Sion's hill  
 Has fixt his sure abode;  
 Nor dare the threatening waves assail  
 The city of our GOD!

The stormy winds and wild abyfs,  
 Th' almighty word obey;  
 Which rules the raging of the sea,  
 And points the storm its way.



G E N E S I S    xxiii. 20.

*The field and the cave were made sure to Abraham, for a  
 possession of a burying-place.*

**A** CQUIRING his *first* spot of ground,  
 A burying place the Patriarch found!  
 May I, like him, a stranger rove,  
 Heir of the promis'd land above;  
 The settlement on earth I crave,  
 The sole possession is—a grave!



E X O D U S    xix. 4.

*I bear you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.*

**A** S an eagle cleaves the air,  
 Whose wings support her young;  
*Jesus* doth his people bear,  
 As swift, as smooth, as strong!  
 Saviour, urge thy rapid flight;  
 Soar to that sublime abode!  
 Bear us far above all height,  
 And bring us home to GOD.

THE

THE

## Arminian Magazine,

For SEPTEMBER 1790.



## PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED.

[BY JOHN WESLEY, M. A.]

[Continued from page 373.]

XLVI. “**B**UT you cannot do this : for then you should  
 “ be called a *Pelagian*, an *Arminian*, and  
 “ what not ?” And are you afraid of hard names ? Then  
 you have not begun to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. “ No,  
 “ that is not the case. But you are afraid, if you do not  
 “ hold election, you must hold free-will, and so rob GOD  
 “ of his glory in man’s salvation.”

I answer, 1. Many of the greatest maintainers of election  
 utterly deny the consequence, and do not allow, that even  
*natural* free-will in man, is repugnant to GOD’s glory.  
 These accordingly assert, that every man living has a mea-  
 sure of natural free-will. So the *assembly* of divines (and  
 therein the body of *Calvinists* both in *England* and *Scotland*)  
 “ GOD hath endued the will of man with that *natural li-*  
 “ *berty*, that is neither forced, nor, by an absolute necessity  
 “ of nature, determined to do good or evil :” Chap. ix.  
 And this they assert of man in his fallen state, even before  
 he receives the grace of GOD.

But I do not carry free-will so far (I mean not in moral  
 things) ; *natural free-will*, in the present state of mankind, I



do not understand; I only assert, that there is a measure of free-will *supernaturally* restored to every man, together with that *supernatural* light, which *enlightens every man that cometh into the world*. But indeed, whether this be natural or no, as to your objection it matters not. For that equally lies against both, against any free-will of any kind: your assertion being thus, "If man has any free-will, GOD cannot have the whole glory of his salvation." Or, "It is not so much for the glory of GOD, to save man as a free agent, put into a capacity of concurring with his grace on the one hand, and of resisting it on the other; as to save him in the way of a necessary agent, by a power which he cannot possibly resist."

XLVII. With regard to the former of these assertions, "If man has any free-will, then GOD cannot have the whole glory of his salvation," is your meaning this: "If any man has any power to *work out his own salvation*, then GOD cannot have the wholy glory?" If it be, I must ask again, what do you mean by GOD's having "the whole glory?" Do you mean, "his doing the whole work, without any concurrence on man's part?" If so, your assertion is, "If man do at all *work together with GOD*, in *working out his own salvation*, then GOD does not do the whole work, without man's *working together with him*." Most true; most sure: but cannot you see, how GOD nevertheless may have all the glory? Why the very power to *work together with him*, was from GOD. Therefore to him is all the glory. Has not even experience taught you this? Have you not often felt, in a particular temptation, power either to resist or yield to the grace of GOD? And when you have yielded to work together with him, did you not find it very possible notwithstanding, to give him all the glory? So that both experience and scripture are against you here, and make it clear to every impartial enquirer, that though man have *freedom* to work or not *work together with GOD*, yet may GOD have the whole glory of his salvation.

XLVIII. If then you say, "We ascribe to GOD alone, the whole glory of our salvation." I answer, so do we

too. If you add, "Nay, but we affirm, that GOD alone does the whole work, without man's working at all;" in one sense, we allow this also. We allow, it is the work of GOD alone, to justify to sanctify, and to glorify, which three comprehend the whole of salvation. Yet we cannot allow, that man can only resist, and not in any wise *work together with GOD*: or, that GOD is so the whole worker of our salvation, as to exclude man's working at all. This I dare not say; for I cannot prove it by scripture: nay, it is flatly contrary thereto: for the scripture is express, that (having received power from GOD) we are to *work out our own salvation*: and that (after the work of GOD is begun in our souls) we are *workers together with him*.

XLIX. Your objection proposed in another form, is this: "It is not so much for the glory of GOD, to save man as a free agent, put into a capacity of either concurring with, or resisting his grace: as to save him in the way of a necessary agent, by a power which he cannot possibly resist."

O that the Lord would answer for himself! that he would arise and maintain his own cause! that he would no longer suffer his servants, few as they are, to weaken one another's hands, and to be wearied not only with *the contradiction of sinners*, but even of those who are in a measure saved from sin! *Wo is me, that I am constrained to dwell with Meshek! among them that are enemies to peace! I labour for peace: but when I speak thereof, they still make themselves ready for battle.*

L. If it must be then, let us look one another in the face. How is it more for the glory of GOD, to save man irresistibly, than to save him as a free agent, by such grace as he may either concur with or resist? I fear you have a confused, unscriptural notion of "the glory of GOD." What do you mean by that expression? The glory of GOD, strictly speaking, is his glorious essence and his attributes, which have been ever of old. And this glory admits of no increase, being the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. But the scripture frequently speaks of the glory of GOD,  
in



in a sense something different from this ; meaning thereby, the manifestation of his essential glory, of his eternal power and Godhead, and of his glorious attributes, more especially his justice, mercy, and truth. And it is in this sense alone, that the glory of GOD is said to be advanced by man. Now then this is the point which it lies on you to prove, “ that “ it does more eminently manifest the glorious attributes of “ GOD, more especially his justice, mercy, and truth, to “ save man irresistibly, than to save him by such grace as it “ is in his power either to concur with, or to resist.”

LI. But you must not imagine, I will be so unwise, as to engage you here on this single point. I shall not now dispute (which yet might be done) whether salvation by an irresistible grace (which indeed makes man a mere machine, and consequently no more rewardable than punishable) whether I say, salvation by irresistible grace, considered apart from its consequences, manifest the glory of GOD more or less, than salvation by grace, which may be resisted. Not so ; (but by the assistance of GOD) I shall take your whole scheme together ; irresistible grace for the elect, implying the denial of saving grace to all others : or unconditional election, with its inseparable companion, unconditional reprobation.

The case is clearly this. You may drive me, on the one hand, unless I will contradict myself, or retract my principles, to own a measure of free-will in every man (though not by nature, as the assembly of divines). And on the other hand, I can drive you, and every assertor of unconditional election, unless you will contradict yourself, or retract your principles, to own unconditional reprobation.

Stand forth then, free-will on the one side, and reprobation on the other. And let us see, whether the one scheme, attended with the absurdity (as you think it) of free-will ; or the other scheme, attended with the absurdity of reprobation, be the more defensible. Let us see (if it please the Father of Lights to open the eyes of our understanding) which of these is most to the glory of GOD, for the display

play of his glorious attributes, for the manifestation of his wisdom, justice, and mercy to the sons of men.

LII. First, his wisdom. If man be in some measure free, if by that light which *lighteth every man that cometh into the world*, there be set before him life and death, good and evil; then how gloriously does the manifold wisdom of GOD appear in the whole œconomy of man's salvation? Being willing that all men should be saved, yet not willing to force them thereto; willing that men should be saved, yet not as trees or stones, but as men, as reasonable creatures, endued with understanding to discern what is good, and liberty either to accept or refuse it; how does he suit the whole scheme of his dispensations to this his *πρόθεσις*, his plan, *the counsel of his will*? His first step is, to enlighten the understanding, by that general knowledge of good and evil. To this he adds many secret reproofs, if they act contrary to this light: many inward convictions, which there is not a man on earth who has not often felt. At other times he gently moves their wills, he draws and woos them, as it were, to walk in the light. He instils into their hearts good desires, though perhaps they know not from whence they come. Thus far he proceeds with all the children of men; yea, even with those who have not the knowledge of his written Word. But in this, what a field of wisdom is displayed, suppose man be in some degree a free agent? How is every part of it suited to this end? To save man, as man; to set life and death before him, and then persuade, not force, him to choose life! According to this grand purpose of GOD, a perfect rule is first set before him, to serve as a *lantern to his feet, and a light in all his paths*. This is offered to him in the form of a law, enforced with the strongest sanctions, the most glorious rewards for them that obey, the severest penalties on them that break it. To reclaim these, GOD uses all manner of ways; he tries every avenue of their souls. He applies sometimes to their understandings, shewing them the folly of their sins: sometimes to their affections, tenderly expostulating with them for their ingratitude, and even condescending to ask, *What could*



*could I have done for you* (consistent with my eternal purpose, not to force you) *which I have not done?* He intermixes sometimes threats, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish:* sometimes promises, *Your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more.* Now what wisdom is seen in all this, if man may indeed choose life or death? But if every man be unalterably confined to heaven or hell, before he comes from his mother's womb, where is the wisdom of this: of dealing with him in every respect *as if he were free*, when it is no such thing? What avails, what can this whole dispensation of GOD avail a reprobate? What are promises or threats, expostulations or reproofs to thee, thou firebrand of hell? What indeed (O my brethren; suffer me to speak, for *I am full of matter*) but empty force, but mere grimace, sounding words, that mean just nothing? O where (to wave all other considerations now) is the wisdom of this proceeding? To what end does all this apparatus serve? If you say, to insure his damnation: alas, what needeth that? seeing this was insured before the foundation of the world. Let all mankind then judge, which of these accounts is more for the glory of GOD's wisdom!

LIII. We come next to his justice. Now if man be capable of choosing good or evil, then he is a proper object of the justice of GOD, acquitting or condemning, rewarding or punishing. But otherwise he is not. A mere machine is not capable of being either acquitted or condemned. Justice cannot punish a stone for falling to the ground; nor, on *your* scheme, a man or falling into sin. For he can no more help it than a stone, if he be, in *your* sense, *fore-ordained to this condemnation*. Why does this man sin? "He cannot cease from sin." Why cannot he cease from sin? "Because he has no saving grace." Why has he no saving grace? "Because GOD of his own good pleasure, hath eternally decreed not to give it him." Is he then under an unavoidable necessity of sinning? "Yes: as much as a stone is of falling. He never had any more power to cease from evil, than a stone has to hang in the air."

“air.” And shall this man, for not doing what he never could do, and for doing what he never could avoid, be sentenced to depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels? “Yes, because it is the sovereign will of “GOD.”—Then “you have either found a new god, or “made one!” This is not the God of the christians. Our GOD is just in all his ways: he reapeth not where he hath not sowed. He requireth only according to what he hath given; and where he hath given little, little is required. The glory of his justice is this, to *reward every man according to his works*. Hereby is that glorious attribute shewn, evidently set forth before men and angels, in that every man is accepted or rejected according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not. This is that just decree which cannot pass, either in time or in eternity.

Thus one scheme gives the justice of GOD its full scope, leaves room for it to be largely displayed in all its branches: whereas the other makes it a mere shadow, yea, brings it absolutely to nothing.

LIV. Just as gloriously does it display his love! supposing it to be fixt on one in ten of his creatures; (might I not rather say, on one in an hundred?) and to have no regard to the rest. Let the ninety and nine reprobates perish without mercy. It is enough for him, to love and save the one elect. But why will he have mercy on these alone, and leave all those to inevitable destruction? “He will—because he “will!” O that GOD would give unto you who thus speak, meekness of wisdom! then would I ask, What would the universal voice of mankind pronounce of the man that should act thus? That being able to deliver millions of men from death, with a single breath of his mouth, should refuse to save any more than one in an hundred, and say, “I will not, because I will not?” How then do you exalt the mercy of GOD, when you ascribe such a proceeding to him? What a strange comment is this on his own word, *that his mercy is over all his works*?

Do you think to evade this by saying, “his mercy is more “displayed in irresistibly saving the elect, than it would be in  
“giving



“giving the choice of salvation to all men, and actual salvation to those that accepted it?” How so? Make this appear, if you can. What proof do you bring of this assertion? I appeal to every impartial mind, whether the reverse be not obviously true? Whether the mercy of GOD would not be far less gloriously displayed, in saving a few by his irresistible power, and leaving all the rest without help, without hope, to perish everlastingly, than in offering salvation to every creature, actually saving all that consent thereto; and in doing for the rest, all that infinite wisdom, almighty power, and boundless love can do, without *forcing* them to be saved, which would be to destroy the very nature he had given them? I appeal, I say, to every impartial mind, and to your own, if not quite blinded with prejudice, which of these accounts places the mercy of GOD in the most advantageous light?

LV. Perhaps you will say, “But there are other attributes of GOD; namely, his sovereignty, unchangeableness; and faithfulness. I hope you do not deny these.” I answer, no; by no means. The sovereignty of GOD appears, 1. In fixing from eternity that decree touching the sons of men, *He that believeth shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be damned*: 2. In all the general circumstances of creation; in the time, the place, the manner of creating all things: in appointing the number and kinds of creatures, visible and invisible: 3. In allotting the natural endowments of men, these to one, and those to another: 4. In disposing the time, place, and other outward circumstances (as parents, relations) attending the birth of every one: 5. In dispensing the various gifts of his Spirit, for the edification of his church: 6. In ordering all temporal things (as health, fortune, friends;) every thing short of eternity. But in disposing the eternal states of men, it is clear, that not sovereignty *alone*, but justice, mercy, and truth hold the reins: The governor of heaven and earth, the I AM over all, GOD, blessed for ever, takes no step here but as these direct, and prepare the way before his face. This is his eternal and irresistible will, as he hath revealed it unto us by his Spirit: declaring

declaring in the strongest terms, adding his oath to his word, and because he could swear by no greater, swearing by himself, *As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth.* The death of him that dieth can never be resolved into my pleasure or sovereign will. No! it is impossible. We challenge all mankind, to bring one clear, scriptural proof to the contrary. You can bring no scripture-proof that GOD ever did, or assertion that he ever will, act as *mere Sovereign*, in eternally condemning any soul that ever was, or will be born into the world.

[Continued at page 469.]

## S E R M O N XXII.

On JOHN i. 47.

*Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.*

1. **S**OME years ago a very ingenious man, professor *Hutcheson* of *Glasgow*, published two treatises, on the original of our ideas of beauty and virtue. In the latter of these he maintains, That the very essence of virtue is, the love of our fellow creatures. He endeavours to prove, that virtue and benevolence are one and the same thing: that every temper is only so far virtuous, as it partakes of the nature of benevolence: and that all our words and actions are then only virtuous, when they spring from the same principle. "But does he not suppose gratitude or the love of GOD to be the foundation of this benevolence?" By no means: such a supposition as this never entered into his mind. Nay he supposes just the contrary: he does not make the least scruple to aver, That if any temper or action be produced by any regard to GOD, or any view to a reward from him, it is not virtuous at all: and that if an action



spring partly from benevolence, and partly from a view to GOD, [the more there is in it of a view to God,] the less there is of virtue.

2. I cannot see this beautiful essay of Mr. *Hutcheson* in any other light, than as a decent, and therefore more dangerous attack upon the whole of the Christian Revelation: seeing this asserts the love of GOD to be the true foundation, both of the love of our neighbour and all other virtues: and accordingly places this as *the first and great commandment*, on which all the rest depend, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.* So that according to the Bible, benevolence, or the love of our neighbour, is only the second commandment. And suppose the scripture be of GOD, it is so far from being true, that benevolence alone is both the foundation and essence of all virtue, that benevolence itself is no virtue at all, unless it spring from the love of GOD.

3. Yet it cannot be denied, that this writer himself has a marginal note in favour of Christianity. "Who would not wish, says he, that the Christian Revelation could be proved to be of GOD? Seeing it is unquestionably the most benevolent institution that ever appeared in the world." But is not this, if it be considered thoroughly, another blow at the root of that Revelation? Is it more or less than to say, "I wish it could; but in truth it cannot be proved?"

4. Another ingenious writer advances an hypothesis totally different from this. Mr. *Wollaston*, in the book which he entitles "The Religion of Nature delineated," endeavours to prove, that "Truth is the essence of virtue," or conformableness to truth. But it seems Mr. *Wollaston* goes farther from the Bible, than Mr. *Hutcheson* himself. For Mr. *Hutcheson*'s scheme sets aside only one of the two great commandments, namely, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy GOD*: whereas Mr. *Wollaston* sets aside both: for his hypothesis does not place the essence of virtue, in either the love of GOD or of our neighbour.

3. However both these authors agree, though in different ways, to put asunder what GOD has joined. But St. Paul unites them together in teaching us to *Speak the truth in love*. And undoubtedly both truth and love were united in him, to whom he who knows the hearts of all men, gives this amiable character, *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile*.

6. But who is it concerning whom our blessed Lord gives this glorious testimony? Who is this *Nathaniel*, of whom so remarkable an account is given, in the latter part of the chapter before us? Is it not strange, that he is not mentioned again in any part of the New Testament? He is not mentioned again under this name: but probably he had another, whereby he was more commonly called. It was generally believed by the ancients, that he is the same person who is elsewhere termed *Bartholomew*, one of our Lord's apostles, and one that in the enumeration of them, both by St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*, is placed immediately after St. *Philip*, who first brought him to his master. It is very probable, that his proper name was *Nathaniel*, a name common among the Jews: and that his other name, *Bartholomew*, meaning only the son of *Ptolemy*, was derived from his father, a custom which was then exceeding common among the Jews, as well as the Heathens.

7. By what little is said of him in the context, he appears to have been a man of an excellent spirit: not hasty of belief, and yet open to conviction, and willing to receive the truth, from whencesoever it came. So we read (ver. 45, &c.) *Philip findeth Nathaniel*, (probably by what we term accident) *and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth*. *Nathaniel said unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* Has *Moses* spoke, or did the prophets write, of any prophet to come from thence? *Philip saith unto him, Come and see*, and thou wilt soon be able to judge for thyself. *Nathaniel* took his advice, without staying to confer with flesh and blood. *Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom*  
is



*is no guile! Nathaniel saith unto him, doubtless with surprise enough, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. Nathaniel answered and saith unto him, (so soon was all prejudice gone!) Rabbi, thou art the Son of GOD! Thou art the King of Israel!*

But what is implied in our Lord's character of him? *In whom is no guile?* It may include all that is contained in that advice,

“ Still let thy heart be true to GOD!  
Thy words to it, thy actions to them both!”

I. 1. We may, first, observe, what is implied in having our hearts true to GOD? Does this imply any less than is included in that gracious command, *My son, give me thy heart?* Then only is our heart *true to GOD*, when we give it to him. We give him our heart in the lowest degree, when we *seek* our happiness in him: when we do not seek it in gratifying *the desire of the flesh*, in any of the pleasures of sense: nor in gratifying *the desire of the eye*, in any of the pleasures of the imagination, arising from grand, or new, or beautiful objects, whether of nature or art: Neither in *the pride of life*, in *the honour that cometh of men*, in being beloved, esteemed and applauded by them: no, nor yet in what some term with equal impudence and ignorance, *the main chance*, the *laying up treasures on earth*. When we seek happiness in none of these, but in GOD alone, then we in some sense give him our heart.

2. But in a more proper sense we give GOD our heart, when we not only seek, but find happiness in him. This happiness undoubtedly begins, when we begin to know him by the teaching of his own Spirit: when it pleases the Father to reveal his Son in our heart, so that we can humbly say, “ My Lord and my GOD.” And when the Son is pleased to reveal his Father in us by *the Spirit of adoption*, crying in our hearts, *Abba Father*, and bearing his testimony with our spirits that we are the children of GOD: then

it

it is that *the love of GOD also is shed abroad in our hearts.* And according to the degree of our love, is the degree of our happiness.

3. But it has been questioned, whether it is the design of GOD, that the happiness which is at first enjoyed by all that know and love him, should continue any longer than, as it were, the day of their espousals? In very many, we must allow, it does not: but in a few months, perhaps weeks or even days, the joy and peace either vanishes at once, or gradually decays. Now if GOD is willing that their happiness should continue, how is this to be accounted for?

4. I believe, very easily. St. *Jude's* exhortation, *Keep yourselves in the love of GOD*, certainly implies, that something is to be done on our part, in order to its continuance. And is not this agreeable to that general declaration of our Lord concerning this and every gift of GOD, *Unto him that hath, shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly: but from him that hath not, that is, uses it not, improves it not, shall be taken away even that which he hath?* Luke viii. 18. Matt. xiii. 12.

5. Indeed, part of the verse in St. *Luke*, is translated in our version, *that which he seemeth to have.* But it is difficult to make sense of this. For if he only *seemeth* to have this, or any other gift of GOD, he really hath it not. And if so, it cannot be taken away: for no man can lose what he never had. It is plain therefore ὃ δόξει ἔχειν, ought to be rendered *what he assuredly hath.* And it may be observed, that the word δόξειν in various places of the New Testament, does not lessen, but strengthen the sense of the word joined with it. Accordingly, whoever improves the grace he has already received, whoever increases in the love of GOD, will surely retain it. GOD will continue, yea, will give it more abundantly: whereas, whoever does not improve this talent, cannot possibly retain it. Notwithstanding all he can do, it will infallibly be taken away from him.

II. 1. Mean time as the heart of him that is an *Israelite indeed* is true to GOD, so his words are suitable thereto. As there is no guile lodged in his heart, so there is none  
found



*found in his lips.* The first thing implied herein is *veracity*, the speaking the truth from his heart: the putting away all wilful lying, in every kind and degree. A lie, according to the well-known definition of it is, *Falsum testimonium cum intentione fallendi*: a falsehood known to be such by the speaker, and uttered with an intention to deceive. But even the speaking a falsehood is not a lie, if it be not spoken with an intent to deceive.

2. Most casuists, particularly those of the church of *Rome*, distinguish lies into three sorts: the first sort is malicious lies; the second, harmless lies; the third, officious lies. Concerning which they pass a very different judgment. I know not any that are so hardy as even to excuse, much less defend, *malicious* lies: that is, such as are told with a design to hurt any one: these are condemned by all parties. Men are more divided in their judgment, with regard to harmless lies, such as are supposed to do neither good nor harm. The generality of men, even in the christian world, utter them without any scruple, and openly maintain, that if they do no harm to any one else, they do none to the speaker. But they have certainly no place in the mouth of him that is *an Israelite indeed*. He cannot tell lies in jest, any more than in earnest; nothing but truth is heard from his mouth. He remembers the express command of GOD to the *Ephesian* christians, *putting away all lying, speak every man truth to his neighbour*, Eph. iv. 25.

3. Concerning *officious* lies, those that are spoken with a design to do good, there have been numerous controversies in the christian church. Abundance of writers, and those men of renown for piety as well as learning, have published whole volumes upon the subject, and in despite of all opposers, not only maintained them to be innocent, but commended them as meritorious. But what saith the scripture? One passage is so express, that there does not need any other. It occurs in the third chapter of the epistle to the *Romans*, where the very words of the apostle are (ver. 7, 8.) *If the truth of GOD hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why am I yet judged as a sinner?*  
(Will

(Will not that lie be excused from blame, for the good effect of it?) *And not rather, as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, let us do evil that good may come? Whose damnation is just.* Here the apostle plainly declares, 1. That the good effect of a lie, is no excuse for it. 2. That it is a mere slander upon christians to say, "they teach men to do evil that good may come." 3. That if any in fact do this, either teach men to do evil that good may come, or do so themselves, their damnation is just. This is peculiarly applicable to those who tell lies, in order to do good thereby. It follows, that officious lies, as well as all others, are an abomination to the GOD of truth. Therefore there is no absurdity, however strange it may sound, in that saying of the ancient father, "I would not tell a wilful lie, to save the souls of the whole world."

4. The second thing which is implied in the character of *an Israelite indeed*, is *sincerity*. As veracity is opposite to lying, so sincerity is to cunning. But it is not opposite to wisdom or discretion, which are well consistent with it. "But what is the difference between wisdom and cunning? Are they not almost, if not quite the same thing?" By no means. The difference between them is exceeding great. Wisdom is the faculty of discerning the best ends, and the easiest means of attaining them. The end of every rational creature is GOD; the enjoying him in time and in eternity. The best, indeed the only means of attaining this end, is, *The faith that worketh by love*. True *prudence* in the general sense of the word, is the same thing with wisdom. *Discretion* is but another name for prudence: if it be not rather a part of it: as it sometimes is referred to our outward behaviour, and means, the ordering our words and actions right. On the contrary, cunning (so it is usually termed among common men, but policy among the great) is in plain terms, neither better nor worse than the art of deceiving. If therefore it be any wisdom at all, it is *the wisdom from beneath*: springing from the bottomless pit, and leading down to the place from whence it came.

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5. The two great means which cunning uses in order to deceive, are *simulation* and *diffimulation*. Simulation is, the seeming to be what we are not : diffimulation, the seeming not to be what we are : according to the old verse, *Quod non est, simulo ; diffimulogue quod est*. Both the one and the other we commonly term, The hanging out of false colours. Innumerable are the shapes that simulation puts on, in order to deceive. And almost as many are used by diffimulation for the same purpose. But the man of sincerity shuns them, and always appears exactly what he is.

6. " But suppose we are engaged with artful men, may we not use silence or reserve, especially if they ask insidious questions, without falling under the imputation of cunning ?" Undoubtedly we may ; nay, we ought on many occasions, either wholly to keep silence, or to speak with more or less reserve as circumstances may require. To say nothing at all, is in many cases consistent with the highest sincerity. And so it is, to speak with reserve, to say only a part, perhaps a small part of what we know. But were we to pretend it to be the whole, this would be contrary to sincerity.

7. A more difficult question than this is, May we not speak the truth in order to deceive ? Like him of old, who broke out into that exclamation, applauding his own ingenuity, "*Hoc ego mihi puto palmarium, ut vera dicendo eos ambos fallam.*" " This I take to be my master-piece, to deceive them both by speaking the truth." I answer, A Heathen might pique himself upon this ; but a Christian could not. For although this is not contrary to veracity, yet it certainly is to sincerity. It is therefore the most excellent way, if we judge it proper to speak at all, to put away both simulation and diffimulation, and to speak the naked truth from our heart.

8. Perhaps this is properly termed *simplicity*. It goes a little farther than sincerity itself. It implies not only, First, The speaking no known falsehood, and Secondly, The not designedly deceiving any one ; but Thirdly, The speaking plainly and artlessly to every one, when we speak at all :  
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the speaking as little children, in a child-like, though not in a childish manner. Does not this utterly exclude the using any *compliments*? A vile word, the very sound of which I abhor: quite agreeing with our poet,

“ It never was good day,  
Since lowly fawning was called compliment.”

I advise men of sincerity and simplicity never to take that filly word in their mouth; but labour to keep at the utmost distance, both from the name and the thing.

9. Not long before that remarkable time,

“ When statesmen sent a prelate cross the seas  
By long-fam'd acts and penalties,”

several bishops attacked bishop *Atterbury* at once, then bishop of *Rocheſter*, and asked, “ My Lord, why will you not suffer your servants to deny you, when you do not care to see company? It is not a lie for them to say, Your lordship is not at home. For it deceives no one. Every one knows it means only, Your lordship is busy.” He replied, “ My lords, if it is (which I doubt) consistent with sincerity, yet I am sure it is not consistent with that sincerity which becomes a christian bishop.”

10. But to return. The sincerity and simplicity of him in whom is no guile, has likewise an influence on his whole behaviour; it gives a colour to his whole outward conversation: which though it be far remote from every thing of clownishness and ill-breeding, or roughness and furliness, yet is plain and artless, and free from all disguise, being the very picture of his heart. The truth and love which continually reign there, produce an open front, and a serene countenance: such as leave no pretence for any one to say, with that arrogant king of *Castile*, “ When GOD made man, he left one capital defect: he ought to have set a window in his breast:” for *he* opens a window in his own breast, by the whole tenor of his words and actions.

11. This then is real, genuine, solid virtue. Not truth alone, nor conformity to truth: this is a *property* of real



virtue ; not the *essence* of it. Not love alone : though this comes nearer the mark ; for *love* in one sense is the *fulfilling of the law*. No : truth and love united together are the essence of virtue or holiness. GOD indispensably requires *truth in the inward parts*, influencing all our words and actions. Yet truth itself, separate from love, is nothing in his sight. But let the humble, gentle, patient love of all mankind, be fixt on its right foundation, namely, the love of GOD springing from faith, from a full conviction that GOD hath given his only Son to die for *my sins* : and then the whole will resolve into that grand conclusion, *worthy of all men to be received : Neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love.*

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## AN EXTRACT

*Of the* Revd. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 391.]

THE scripture which came in turn at *Newgate* to-day, was the vii<sup>th</sup> of *St. John*. The words which I chiefly insisted on as applicable to every minister of Christ, who in any wise follows the steps of his master, were these, *The world cannot hate you ; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil. There was a murmuring therefore concerning him among the multitude ; for some said, he is a good man : Others said nay, but he deceiveth the people.* After sermon I was informed the sheriffs had ordered, “ I should preach here for the future, *but once a week.*” Yea, and this is *once too often*, if he *deceiveth the people* : But if otherwise, why not once a day ?

Saturday 19. At *Weaver's-Hall*, a woman first, and then a boy (about fourteen years of age) was overwhelmed with  
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fin and sorrow and fear. But we cried to GOD, and their souls were delivered.

*Sunday 20.* Seeing many of the rich at *Clifton* church, my heart was much pained for them, and I was earnestly desirous that some even of them might *enter into the kingdom of heaven*. But full as I was, I knew not where to begin, in warning them to flee from the wrath to come, till my Testament opened on these words, *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*: In applying which, my soul was so enlarged, that methought I could have cried out, (in another sense than poor, vain *Archimedes*) "Give me where to stand, and I will shake the earth." GOD's sending forth lightning with the rain, did not hinder about fifteen hundred, from staying at *Rose-Green*. Our scripture was, *It is the glorious GOD that maketh the thunder. The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation, the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice*. In the evening he spoke to three whose souls were all storm and tempest, and immediately there was a great calm,

During this whole time, I was almost continually asked, either by those who purposely came to *Bristol*, to enquire concerning this strange work, or by my old or new correspondents, *How can these things be?* And innumerable cautions were given me (generally grounded on gross misrepresentations of things) "Not to regard visions or dreams; or to fancy people had remission of sins, because of their cries or tears, or bare outward professions." To one who had many times wrote to me on this head, the sum of my answer was as follows:

"The question between us turns chiefly, if not wholly on matter of fact. You deny, That GOD does *now* work *these* effects: At least, that he works them in *this* manner. I affirm both; because I have heard these things with my own ears, and seen them with my eyes. I have seen (as far as a thing of this kind can be seen) very many persons changed in a moment, from the spirit of fear, horror, despair, to the spirit of love, joy and peace; and from sinful desire till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing  
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the will of GOD. These are matters of fact, whereof I have been, and almost daily am, an eye or ear witness. What I have to say, touching visions or dreams is this: I know several persons in whom this great change was wrought, in a dream or during a strong representation to the eye of their mind, of Christ either on the cross or in glory. This is the fact; let any judge of it as they please. And that such a change was *then* wrought, appears (not from their shedding tears only, or falling into fits, or crying out: These are not the fruits, as you seem to suppose, whereby I judge) but from the whole tenor of their life, *till then* many ways wicked; *from that time*, holy, just and good.

I will shew you him that was a lion *till then*, and is now a lamb: Him that *was* a drunkard, and is now exemplarily sober: The whoremonger that *was*, who now abhors the very garment spotted by the flesh. These are my living arguments for what I assert, viz. *That GOD does now, as aforetime, give remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost, even to us and to our children: Yea and that, always suddenly, as far as I have known, and often in dreams or in the visions of GOD.* If it be not so, I am found a false witness before GOD. For these things I *do*, and by his grace *will* testify."

Perhaps it might be, because of the hardness of our hearts, unready to receive any thing, unless we see it with our eyes and hear it with our ears, that GOD in tender condescension to our weakness, suffered so many outward signs at the very time when he wrought this inward change, to be continually seen and heard among us. But although they saw *signs and wonders* (for so I must term them) yet many would not believe. They could not indeed *deny* the facts; but they could *explain* them away. Some said, "These were purely *natural* effects; The people fainted away, only because of the heat and closeness of the rooms." And others were sure, "It was all a cheat: They might help it if they would. Else why were these things only in their private societies? Why were they not done in the face of the sun?" To-day Mond. 21. our Lord answered for himself. For while I was enforcing these words, *Be still and know that I*

am GOD. He began to make bare his arm, not in a close room, neither in private, but in the open air, and before two thousand witnesses. One and another and another was struck to the earth; exceedingly trembling at the presence of his power. Others cried, with a bitter cry, *What must we do to be saved?* And in less than an hour, seven persons, wholly unknown to me till that time, were rejoicing and singing, and with all their might giving thanks to the GOD of their salvation.

In the evening, I was interrupted at *Nicholas-street*, almost as soon as I had begun to speak, by the cries of one who was *pricked at the heart*, and strongly groaned for pardon and peace. Yet I went on to declare what GOD had already done, in proof of that important truth, that he is *not willing any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*. Another person dropped down, close to one who was a strong assertor of the contrary doctrine. While he stood astonished at the sight, a little boy near him was seized in the same manner. A young man who stood behind, fixed his eyes on him, and sunk down himself as one dead: but soon began to roar out and beat himself against the ground, so that six men could scarcely hold him. His name was *Thomas Maxfield*. Except *J—H—n*, I never knew one so torn of the evil one. Mean while many others began to cry out to the *Saviour of all*, that he would come and help them, insomuch that all the house, (and indeed all the street for some space) was in an uproar. But we continued in prayer; and before ten, the greater part found rest to their souls.

I was called from supper to one who feeling in herself such a conviction as she never had known before, had run out of the society in all haste, *that she might not expose herself*. But the hand of GOD followed her still, so that after going a few steps, she was forced to be carried home, and when she was there grew worse and worse. She was in a violent agony when we came. We called upon GOD, and her soul found rest.



About twelve, I was greatly importuned to go and visit one person more. She had only one struggle after I came, and was then filled with peace and joy. I think 29 in all, had their heaviness turned into joy this day.

*Tuesday 22.* I preached to about a thousand at *Bath*. There were several fine, gay things among them, to whom especially I called, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!*

*Saturday 26.* One came to us in deep despair; but after an hour spent in prayer, went away in peace. The next day, having observed in many a zeal which did not suit with the sweetness and gentleness of love, I preached at *Rose-green* on those words (to the largest congregation I ever had there, I believe upwards of ten thousand souls) *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* At the society in the evening, 11 were deeply convinced of sin, and soon after comforted.

*Monday 28.* I began preaching at *Weaver's-hall*, at eleven in the forenoon; where two persons were enabled to cry out in faith, *My Lord and my GOD!* As were seven, during the sermon in the afternoon, before several thousand witnesses; and ten in the evening at *Baldwin-street*; of whom two were children.

*Tuesday 29.* I was unknowingly engaged in conversation with a famous infidel, a confirmer of the unfaithful in these parts. He appeared a little surprized and said, *He would pray to GOD to shew him the true way of worshipping him.*

On Ascension-day in the morning, some of us went to *King's-Weston-hill*, four or five miles from *Bristol*. Two gentlemen going by, sent up to us in sport, many persons from the neighbouring villages: to whom therefore I took occasion to explain these words, *Thou art ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive; and received gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious, that the Lord GOD might dwell among them.*

*Sunday, June 3.* In the morning to about six thousand persons, in concluding the xiii<sup>th</sup> chapter of the first epistle

to the *Corinthians*, I described a truly charitable man. At *Hannam* I enforced these words, *That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before GOD.* And again in the afternoon at *Rose-green*, to, I believe, eight or nine thousand. In the evening not being permitted to meet in *Baldwin-street*, we met in the shell of our new society-room. The scripture which came in course to be explained, was, *Marvel not, if the world hate you.* We sung

Arm of the Lord, awake, awake,

Thine own immortal strength put on :

*And GOD, even our own GOD gave us his blessing.*

Monday 4. Many came to me and earnestly advised me, "not to preach abroad in the afternoon, because there was "a combination of several persons, who threatened terrible "things." This report being spread abroad brought many thither, of *the better sort of people* (so called) and added, I believe, more than a thousand to the ordinary congregation. The scripture to which, not my choice, but the providence of GOD directed me was, *Fear not thou, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy GOD. I will strengthen thee, yea I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.* The power of GOD came with his word: so that none scoffed, or interrupted, or opened his mouth.

Tuesday 5. There was great expectation at *Bath*, of what a noted man was to do to me there: and I was much intreated "not to preach; because no one knew what might happen." By this report I also gained a much larger audience, among whom were many of the rich and great. I told them plainly, *the scripture had concluded them all under sin*, high and low, rich and poor, one with another. Many of them seemed to be not a little surprised, and were sinking a pace into seriousness, when their champion appeared, and coming close to me, asked "by what authority I did these things?" I replied, by the authority of Jesus Christ, conveyed to me by the (now) Archbishop of *Canterbury*, when he laid his hands upon me and said, "Take thou authority to preach the gospel." He said, "this is contrary



contrary to act of parliament. This is a conventicle." I answered, "Sir, the conventicles mentioned in that act (as the preamble shews) are *seditionous* meetings. But this is not such. Here is no shadow of sedition. Therefore it is not contrary to that act." He replied, "I say it is. And beside, your preaching frightens people out of their wits." *Sir, did you ever hear me preach?* No. *How then can you judge of what you never heard?* Sir, by common report. Common report is enough. *Give me leave, Sir, to ask, is not your name Nash?* My name is *Nash*. *Sir, I dare not judge of you by common report. I think it not enough to judge by.* Here he paused a while, and having recovered himself, asked, "I desire to know, what this people comes here for?" On which one replied, "Sir, leave him to me. Let an old woman answer him." "You, Mr. *Nash*, take care of your body. We take care of our souls, and for the food of our souls we come here." He replied not a word, but walked away.

As I returned, the street was full of people, hurrying to and fro, and speaking great words. But when any of them asked, "which is he?" and I replied, "I am he," they were immediately silent. Several ladies following me into Mr. *Marchant's* house, the servant told me,—"There were some wanted to speak with me." I went to them, and said, "I believe, ladies, the maid mistook: you only wanted to look at me." I added, "I do not expect that the rich and great should want either to speak with *me*, or hear *me*, for I speak the plain truth; a thing *you* hear little of, and do not desire to hear." A few more words past between us, and I retired.

*Thursday 7.* I preached at *Priest-Down*, on *What must we do to be saved?* In the midst of the prayer after sermon, two men, (hired, as we afterwards understood, for that purpose,) began singing a ballad. After a few mild words (for I saw none that were angry) used without effect, we all began singing a psalm which put them utterly to silence. We then poured out our souls in prayer for them, and they appeared.

peared altogether confounded. O may this be a day much to be remembered by them, for the loving kindness of the Lord!

*Monday 11.* I received a pressing letter from *London* (as I had several others before) to come thither as soon as possible: "Our brethren at *Fetter-lane* being in great confusion for want of my presence and advice." I therefore preached in the afternoon on these words, *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of GOD.* After sermon, I commended them to the grace of GOD, in whom they had believed. Surely GOD hath yet a work to do in this place. I have not found such love, no not in *England*; nor so childlike, artless, teachable a temper, as he hath given to this people.

Yet during this whole time I had many thoughts concerning the *unusual manner* of my ministring among them. But after frequently laying it before the Lord, and calmly weighing whatever objections I heard against it, I could not but adhere to what I had some time since wrote to a friend, who had freely spoken his sentiments concerning it. An extract of that letter I here subjoin; that the matter may be placed in a clear light.

*Dear Sir,*

THE best return I can make for the kind freedom you use, is to use the same to you. O may the GOD whom we serve sanctify it to us both, and teach us the whole truth as it is in Jesus!

You say, "you cannot reconcile some parts of my behaviour with the character I have long supported." No, nor ever will. Therefore I have disclaimed that character on every possible occasion. I told all in our ship, all at *Savannah*, all at *Frederica*, and that over and over, in express terms, "I am not a Christian: I only follow after if haply I may attain it." When they urged my works and self-denial, I answered short, *Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and my body to be burned, I am nothing.* For I



have not charity. I do not love GOD with all my heart. If they added, "Nay, but you could not preach as you do, if you was not a Christian:" I again confronted them with *St. Paul, Though I speak with the tongue of men and angels, and have not charity, I am nothing.* Most earnestly therefore, both in public and private, did I inculcate this, "Be not ye shaken however I may fall; for the foundation standeth sure."

If you ask, "On what principle then I acted?" It was this, "A desire to be a Christian, and a conviction on that whatever I judge conducive thereto, that I am bound to do; where-ever I judge I can best answer this end, thither it is my duty to go." On this principle I set out for *America*; on this, I visited the Moravian church; and on the same, am I ready now (GOD being my helper) to go to *Abyssinia* or *China*, or whithersoever it shall please GOD by this conviction to call me.

As to your advice, "That I should settle in college," I have no business there, having now no office and no pupils. And whether the other branch of your proposal be expedient for me, viz. "To accept of a cure of souls;" it will be time enough to consider, when one is offered to me.

But in the mean time, you think "I ought to sit still; because otherwise I should invade another's office, if I interfered with other people's business and intermeddled with souls that did not belong to me." You accordingly ask, "How is it that I assemble Christians who are none of my charge, to sing psalms and pray and hear the scriptures expounded: And think it hard to justify doing this in other men's parishes, upon catholic principles?"

Permit me to speak plainly. If by catholic principles, You mean any other than *scriptural*, they weigh nothing with me: I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice than the holy scriptures. But on scriptural principles, I do not think it hard to justify whatever I do. GOD in scripture commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this, in another's parish; that is, in effect,

effect, to do it at all; seeing I have no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Whom then shall I hear? GOD or man? *If it be just to obey man rather than GOD, judge you. A dispensation of the gospel is committed to me, and 'tis me if I preach not the gospel.* But where shall I preach it upon the principles you mention? Why, not in *Europe, Asia, Africa, or America*: Not in any of the Christian parts, at least, of the habitable earth. For all these are, after a sort divided into parishes. If it be said, "Go back then to the Heathens from whence you came." Nay, but neither could I now, (on your principles) preach to them. For all the Heathens in *Georgia* belong to the parish either of *Savannah* or *Frederica*.

[Continued at page 487.]

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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[Continued from page 400.]

“ONE considerable part of humility is, to know our own place. Every member has its peculiar appointment in the human body, where the wise Master-builder has placed it. And it is well, while each continues its place. But as every dislocated bone gives pain, and must continue so to do, till it is replaced in its proper socket: so every dislocated affection must give pain to the soul, till it is restored to its own place; till it is totally fixt in GOD, till we resign our whole selves to the disposal of infinite wisdom. This is the proper place of every rational creature: and in this place he invariably stood. Whatever he believed to be the will of GOD, he resolutely performed, though it were to pluck out a right eye, to lay his *Isaac* on the altar. When it appeared that GOD called him to any journey, he immediately prepared for it without the least hesitation:



hesitation : although for the last years of his life, he hardly ever travelled to any considerable distance, without feeling some tendency to a relapse into his former distemper. And it was usually some weeks after his return, before he recovered his usual strength.

“ *Humility* continually produces *meekness*, and the latter bears an exact proportion to the former. I received a letter on this head but a few days since, which it may not be improper to subjoin.

“ Rev. Sir,

“ I was yesterday in company with several clergymen, who among other things mentioned Mr. *Fletcher*, and seemed particularly anxious, that in the account of his life, a proper degree of caution should be observed in the panegyric that may be applied to his character. They say he was extremely passionate ; and that there was in many instances an austere severity and rigour in his conduct to the young people under his care, particularly at *Trevecha*. As this information comes from a gentleman, eminent for his knowledge of mankind, and universally esteemed as one of the greatest geniuses of the age, and one whose veracity has never been questioned, it will have no small weight in the learned world.”

7. I am glad this information came to my hands in time, as it may now receive so sufficient an answer, as will probably satisfy every candid and impartial reader.

Two things are here asserted concerning Mr. *Fletcher*; the first, That he was extremely passionate ; the second, That there was an austere severity and rigour in his conduct toward the young persons under his care, particularly at *Trevecha*. The former assertion is unquestionably true : such he was *by nature*. The latter I question much, with regard to his conduct at *Tern* as well as at *Trevecha*. None can be a more competent witness of his conduct at *Tern*, than Mr. *Vaughan*, who lived so long in the same house ; and whose testimony concerning him has been so largely given in the preceding pages. But waving this : can it possibly be supposed

fed, that either Mr. *Hill*, or his sons then verging toward manhood, would have borne the austere rigour and severity of a young man, that received his bread from them? Yea, and that year after year? Surely the supposition shocks all credibility.

8. Equally incredible is the assertion of his "austere severity and rigour" toward the young men at *Treoecka*. This is inconsistent with the whole account given by Mr. *Benson*, an eye and ear witness of all his conduct. Had it been true in any degree, would it have been possible that he should have been so esteemed and beloved by those very young men? I cannot form the least conjecture, whence such an assertion could arise, unless it was invented by some young man, after Mr. *Fletcher* was dismissed, in order to ingratiate himself with his patroness.

9. The farther account which Mr. *Benson* gives of him from personal knowledge is this. "Mr. *Fletcher*," says he, "was naturally a man of strong passions, and prone to anger in particular: insomuch that he has frequently thrown himself on the floor, and laid there most of the night bathed in tears, imploring victory over his own spirit. And he did not strive in vain: he did obtain the victory in a very eminent degree. For twenty years and upwards before his death, no one ever saw him out of temper, or heard him utter a rash expression, on any provocation whatever. I have often thought the testimony that bishop *Burnet* (in the history of his own times) bears of archbishop *Leighton*, might be borne of him with equal propriety. "After an intimate acquaintance with the archbishop for many years, and after being with him by night and by day, at home and abroad, in public and in private, on sundry occasions, and in various affairs: I must say, I never heard an idle word drop from his lips, nor any conversation which was not to the use of edifying. I never saw him in any temper, in which I myself would not have wished to be found at death." Any that has been intimately acquainted with Mr. *Fletcher*, will say the same of him. But they that knew him best will say it with the most assurance.

10. His



10. His *disengagements from the world and love of the poor*, Mrs. Fletcher joins together. "Never," says she, "did I behold any one more dead to the things of the world. His treasure was above: and so was his heart also. He always remembered that admonition of the apostle, *No man that warreth entangleth himself with the things of this life*. It was his constant endeavour to preserve a mind free and disencumbered: and he was exceeding wary of undertaking any business, that might distract and hurry it. Yet in his worldly concerns, knowing himself to be a steward for GOD, he would not through carelessness, waste one penny. He likewise judged it to be his bounden duty to demand what he knew to be his right. And yet he could well reconcile this with that word, *He that will have thy coat, let him have thy cloake also*. Indeed whether he had less or more, it was the same thing upon his own account: as he had no other use for it, but to spread the gospel, and to assist the poor. And he frequently said, he never was happier, than when he had given away the last penny he had in his house. If at any time I had gold in my drawers, it seemed to afford him no comfort. But if he could find a handful of small silver, when he was going out to see the sick, he would express as much pleasure over it, as a miser would in discovering a bag of hid treasure. He was never better pleased with my employment, than when he had set me to prepare food or physic for the poor. He was hardly able to relish his dinner, if some sick neighbour had not part of it; and sometimes, if any one of them was in want, I could not keep the linen in his drawers. On Sundays he provided for numbers of people, who came from a distance to hear the word: and his house, as well as his heart, was devoted to their convenience: to relieve them that were afflicted in body or mind, was the delight of his heart. Once a poor man who feared GOD, being brought into great difficulties, he took down all the pewter from the kitchen shelves, saying, "this will help you: and I can do without it: a wooden trencher will serve me just as well." In epidemic and contagious distempers, when the neighbours

bours were afraid to nurse the sick, he has gone from house to house, seeking some that were willing to undertake it. And when none could be found, he has offered his service, to sit up with them himself. But this was at his first setting out here. At present there appears in many (and has done so for many years) a most ready mind to visit and relieve the distressed.

11. "He thoroughly complied with that advice,

"Give to all something: to a good poor man,  
Till thou change hands, and be where he began."

I have heard him say, that when he lived alone in his house, the tears have come into his eyes, when one has brought him five or six insignificant letters at three or fourpence apiece: and perhaps he had only a single shilling in the house, to distribute among the poor to whom he was going. He frequently said to me, "O Polly, can we not do without beer? Let us drink water, and eat less meat. Let our necessities give way to the extremities of the poor."

12. But with all his generosity and charity he was strictly careful to follow the advice of the apostle, *Owe no man any thing*. He contracted no debt. While he gave all he had, he made it a rule to pay ready money for every thing, believing this was the best way to keep the mind unencumbered and free from care. Meanwhile his substance, his time, his strength, his life, were devoted to the service of the poor. And last of all he gave *me* to them. For when we were married, he asked me solemnly, "whether I was willing to marry his parish?" And the first time he led me among his people in this place, he said, "I have not married this wife only for myself, but for *you*. I asked her of the Lord, for *your* comfort, as well as my own."

13. All his life, as well as during his illness, particularly at *Newington* and *Bristlington* (as has been largely related) he was *grateful* in a very high degree to those who conferred the least benefit upon him: yea, or even endeavoured so to do. One of these was Mr. *Richard Edwards* of *London*, to whose care he was committed as a leader, when

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he was first admitted into the *London* society. A lively sense of the kindness which Mr. *Edwards* then shewed him, he retained to the end of his life. This he testified by repeated letters: one or two of which it may be well to transcribe.

Tern, Oct. 19, 1756.

“ Dearest brother,

This is to let you know, that (praise be to the Lord) I am very well in body, and pretty well in soul—But I have very few christian friends here. And GOD has been pleased to take away the chief of those few by a most comfortable death. And lately I heard that my aged father is gone the way of all flesh. But the glorious circumstances of his death make me ample amends for the sorrow which I felt. For some years I have wrote to him with as much freedom as I could have done to a son, though not with so much effect as I wished. But last spring GOD visited him with a severe illness, which brought him to a sense of himself. And after a deep repentance, he died about a month ago in the full assurance of faith. This has put several of my friends on thinking seriously, which affords me great cause of thankfulness. I am,

your unworthy brother

and servant in the Lord,

JOHN FLETCHER.”

14. Two years after, he wrote to him as follows:

“ I thank you for your encouraging observations. I want them, and use them by the grace of GOD. When I received yours, I had not had one opportunity of preaching: so incensed were all the clergy against me. One however let me have the use of his church, the abbey church at *Shrewsbury*. I preached in the forenoon with some degree of the demonstration of the Spirit. The congregation was very numerous: and I believe one half at least desired to hear me again. But the minister would not let me have the pulpit any more. The next Sunday the minister of a  
neigh-

neighbouring parish lying a dying, I was sent for to officiate for him. He died a few days after, and the chief man in the parish offered to make interest, that I might succeed him. But I could not consent. The next Sunday I preached at *Shrewsbury* again, but in another church. The next day I set out for *Bristol*, and was much refreshed among the brethren. As I returned, I called at *New-Kingswood*, about sixteen miles from *Bristol*. (The minister offering me his church) I preached to a numerous congregation, gathered on half an hour's notice. I think the seed then sown will not be lost."——

15. "Another uncommon talent which GOD had given him, says Mrs. F. was a peculiar *sensibility* of spirit. He had a temper the most feeling of any I ever knew. Hardly a night passed over, but some part of it was spent in groans for the souls and bodies committed to his care. I dreaded his hearing either of the sins or sufferings of any of his people before the time of his going to bed, knowing how strong the impressions would be on his mind, chasing the sleep from his eyes.

"And yet I have heard him speak of a time, twelve or fourteen years ago, when he was greatly tempted to think, that he was not sensible enough of the afflictions of his fellow-creatures. He observed Christ bore our infirmities, and carried our sorrows: but added he, "I have not that Christ-like temper: I do not bear the sorrows of others." After being for some time buffeted with this temptation, he prayed that a measure of this spirit might be given him. Not long after, as he was visiting a poor, sick family, so lively a sense of their affliction, on a sudden, fell upon his mind, that he could scarce get home. As soon as he sat down in his house, his soul was penetrated with such a sense of the woes of mankind, as utterly depressed and overcame him, and drank up his spirits, insomuch that he could not help himself, or move from one chair to another. And he was no more able to walk than a new-born child. At the same time he seemed to lose the use of his memory, and of all his faculties. He thought, what is this? Is it a



disease? Is it a stroke of the palsy? Rather is it not an answer to my own ill-judged, though well intended prayer? Did I not ask a burden unsuitable to a finite, and capable of being borne only by an infinite being? He remained some hours in this situation. Then it came into his mind, If this is a purely natural event, the will of the Lord be done! But if it be the answer to an improper prayer, GOD will answer again by removing it. He cried to the Lord, and was immediately restored to strength both of body and mind.

“ When we were at *Leeds*, in the year 1784, I had another proof of the tender sensibility of his heart. O how deeply was he affected, concerning the welfare of his brethren! When any little disputes arose between them, his inmost soul groaned under the burden. And by two or three o’clock in the morning I was sure to hear him breathing out prayer for the peace and prosperity of Sion. When I observed to him, I was afraid it would hurt his health, and wished him to sleep more, he would answer, “ O *Polly*, the cause of GOD lies near my heart!”

“ Toward *me*, his tenderness was exerted in its utmost extent. My soul, my body, my health, my ease and comfort, were his daily study. We had no thought either past or present, which we purposely concealed from each other. My spiritual advancement was his constant endeavour: and to this he was continually stirring me up, inviting me to walk more closely with GOD: urging that thought, “ O my dear, let us pray for dying grace; for we shall not be long here.” His temporal affairs he committed solely to me, though he was always ready to assist me in the smallest matters.

“ One article more remains to be spoken of, namely, his *communion with GOD*. Although he enjoyed this, more or less at all times and in all places, yet I have frequently heard him observe, that the seasons of his closest communion were always in his own house or in the church: usually in the latter. It is much to be lamented, that we have no account of it from his own pen. It was his constant  
endeavour

endeavour to maintain an uninterrupted sense of the presence of GOD. In order to this, he was slow of speech, and had the greatest government of his words. Indeed he both acted, and spoke, and thought, as under the eye of GOD. And thus setting GOD always before him, he remained unmoved in all occurrences, at all times and on every occasion possessing inward recollection. Nor did I ever see him diverted therefrom, on any occasion whatever, either going out or coming in, whether by ourselves or in company. Sometimes he took his journies alone: but above a thousand miles I have travelled with him: during which, neither change of company, place, nor the variety of circumstances which naturally occur in travelling, ever seemed to make the least difference in his firm attention to the presence of GOD. To preserve this uniform habit of soul, he was so watchful and recollected, that to such as were unexperienced in these things, it might appear like insensibility: although no one could converse in a more lively and sensible manner, even on natural things, when he saw it was to the glory of GOD. He was always striving to raise his own and every other spirit to a close and immediate intercourse with GOD. And I can say with truth, all his union with me was so intermingled with prayer and praise, that every employment, and every meal were perfumed therewith."

16. I had concluded what I purposed to say concerning the *character* of Mr. Fletcher, when I received a long letter from Mr. Benson; an extract of which I cannot withhold from the reader. For although most of the particulars hereof are contained in the preceding pages, yet as they are here placed in quite another order, and have also several new circumstances intermixed, I could not doubt of their being both agreeable and profitable to every person of piety.

"As to *drawing* the character of that great and good man," says Mr. Benson, "it is what I will not attempt: but if I can suggest any thing that will *assist* you therein, I shall think my little labour well bestowed. With this view I have been looking over many of his letters, and observe in them all, what I have a thousand times observed in his conversation



tion and behaviour, the plainest marks of every christian grace and virtue.

“ Perhaps if he followed his Master more closely in one thing than another, it was in *humility*. It is one branch of poverty of spirit (another word for humility) to think meanly of ourselves. And he certainly thought meanly of himself, both as a *christian*, as *preacher*, and as a *writer*. I need not say, how he shone in all those characters ; but he knew not that he shone in any of them. How low an opinion he had of himself as a christian, manifestly appears from his placing himself at the feet of all, and shewing a continual desire to learn from every company he was in. He paid all due deference to the judgment of others, readily acknowledged whatever was good in them, and seemed to think himself the only person in whom there dwelt no excellency worth notice. Hence it was that he often wrote and spoke, as if he had not received that grace, which he undoubtedly had received. And indeed he overlooked what he had attained, through the eager desire he had of higher and greater things. Many of his letters shew, how very meanly he thought of his own attainments as a christian, through the continually increasing views which he had of the divine purity, and of the high degree of conformity thereto, which is attainable even in this world.

“ And however little he was in his own eyes as a *christian*, he was equally so as a *writer* and a *preacher*. In consequence of the mean opinion he had of his own abilities, he gladly offered what he wrote to be corrected by any friend, however inferior to himself. Thus in a letter, dated Nov. 23, 1771, he says, “ I have sent a letter of fifty pages upon Antinomianism. I beg, upon my bended knees, you would revise and correct it. I have followed my light, small as it is. Put yours to mine.” What a mean opinion he had of his own *writings*, appears from a letter written, March 20, 1774, “ I do not repent of my having engaged in this controversy : for, though my little publication cannot reclaim those, who are confirmed in believing the lie of the day, yet they may here and there stop one from swallowing

lowing it at all, or at least from swallowing it so deeply." Two years after, he says, "I have almost run my race of scribbling: and I have preached as much as I could, though to little purpose: but I must not complain. If one person has received good by my ten years labour, it is an honour for which I cannot be too thankful, if my mind were as low as it should be. Let us bless the Lord in all things."

"As difficult as it is to think meanly of ourselves, it is still more difficult to be willing that others should think meanly of us. And how eminent he was in this, appears from hence, that he was constantly upon his guard, lest any expression should drop either from his lips or pen, which tended to make any one think well of him, either on account of his family, or learning, or parts, or usefulness. Yea, he took as much pains to *conceal* his excellencies, as others do to *shew* them, having the same desire to be little and unknown, which many have to be known and esteemed.

[Continued at page 495.]

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*The JOURNAL of FRANCIS ASBURY, Bishop of the  
Methodist-Episcopal Church.*

From March 26, 1772, to April 14, 1773.

(Continued from page 407.)

**L**ORD's day 28. After preaching yesterday at *Samuel Forward's*, I returned to friend *Preston's* and preached twice to-day. Then rode to Mr. *Dellam's*, and spent the evening comfortably.

Monday, *March 1*. Mr. *Dellam* and myself rode to *Bond's*, where I spoke with great plainness of speech. There appears to be some reason to doubt of the people in general here; though the young women seem to be deeply serious and thoughtful. I then went to Capt. *S—'s*; but  
found



found very little satisfaction. The man and his wife, are, I fear, too fond of their own opinions. After preaching here, I went to *Bond's* again and spent some time in serious conversation; afterwards prayed and gave an exhortation; I rode to *Murray's* and preached; then returned to *C—'s*, & preached there: but found the old man too much of a Quaker in principle. He objects against prayer in his family; and greatly discourages his daughter, who strives to live in the fear of GOD. Frid. *March 5.* Went to *John Owen's*, where we had a melting time; and the people seemed to be much affected both in the day and in the evening. Satan has assaulted me very much of late: but hitherto the Lord hath helped and delivered me. I came next to *Baltimore*, and had many to hear the word.

Saturday 6. Went to the *Point*, but the people seemed very hard in their minds. In the evening, at *Baltimore*, we had a moving, melting season. I humbly believe, the labour was not in vain.

Monday 8. Rose this morning with a determination to fight or die; and spent an hour in earnest prayer. Lord, keep me ever watchful. I was also much comforted by a letter, which I lately received from *Richard Owen*. Part of which was as follows, "I know not what it will come to. Almost every person seems to be under a religious concern. There are about 22 persons already joined in society at *Seneca*. At *George-town*, four have been lately enabled to rejoice in GOD; and one at *Rocky-creek*. Blessed be GOD, who hath not forgotten to be gracious."

Tuesday 9. This was a day of sweet peace to my soul. Went to dine with one Mr. *L—*, and found him and his wife both serious. Preached in the evening, with power.

Wednesday 10. I went to *N. P—'s*. It was a rainy morning; but a time of power to those who were present. In going thence to Mr. *Gatch's*, it was with great difficulty we crossed the water. The next morning, set off for *Gunpowder-neck*; but found the *Great falls* very high; however, I got in about one o'clock, and found it a good time, while preaching the word of GOD.

Friday

Friday 12. Preached a funeral sermon at *John Wilson's*, from *Isaiah lvii. 1, 2.*—*The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall rest in peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.* This was a solemn time indeed. What melting and weeping appeared among the people! There was scarce a dry eye to be seen. O that it may not be as seed sown by the way-side! After preaching, rode to *Mr. Dellam's*; and met with brother *King* and brother *Webster*, and found myself abundantly comforted in their company.

Lord's day 14. Preached at *Bohemia*. There were but few people; though it was a melting time. Rode then to *S. Hersey's*, but was much shut up in preaching.

Monday 15. Found my mind, this morning, free to do the will of GOD; and was more than ever strengthened in prayer. But set out for *Worton*, to-day, with my mind depressed in such a manner, as I hardly ever felt it before. In my journey, my heart sunk within me; and knew not why. At a certain *Mr. Dixon's*, at the *Cross-roads*, many people, who appeared to be strangers to the truth, were waiting to hear the word. I stood at the door, and declared—*The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of GOD is at hand.* I spoke with great feeling, and exerted myself much, but could not get my spirit free. They persuaded me to stay all night; but it was as if I had been bound in chains.

Tuesday 16. Went to *Randall's*, and found myself delivered from my shackles; but still my spirit is not altogether at home; it longs for GOD, and my heart has been kept in a great measure pure. I do humbly and confidently hope, to live more to GOD than ever. Lord, keep me every moment.

Wednesday 17. Went down to the lower church, but with some backwardness of mind. However, there were many people, who were still and attentive; and I felt a melting sense of GOD in my own soul.



Friday 18. Spoke, with power, to many people at *Newcastle*. Went thence to *Wilmington*, and spoke to a few people with great feeling.

Lord's day 20. But few attended, at *Isaac Hersey's*, because of the rain ; but I felt myself greatly assisted. Went thence, through the rain, to *Newport*, where many people attended in the evening. They appeared to have very little sense of religious things.

Monday 21. Being a rainy day, we set out late for *Marlborough*. There was, notwithstanding, a large congregation waiting. Though unwell, I gave them an exhortation at night, and *Isaac Rawlins* preached. He has been of some use to the people here.

Tuesday 22. My mind was serene ; and I felt a nearness to GOD—a determination to live to him alone.

Went to *Thomas Ellis's*, and felt much life while preaching to a large company there : but was much afflicted with a violent pain in the head.

Wednesday 23. Many great people attended the preaching at *Woodard's* ; and we had a comfortable time. Rode thence to *Samuel Hooper's* : many Quakers were present, and it was a moving season—I then went about twenty miles, through wet weather and bad roads, to Mr. *Tufsey's*. The night was very dark, the road was through the woods, and it was late before we reached the place ; but, by the help of a good guide, I got there safe at last.

“ In all my ways, thy hand I own,  
 Thy ruling Providence I see ;  
 O help me still my course to run,  
 And still direct my paths to thee.”

Was somewhat troubled to hear of Mr. *W*—who had printed some of Mr. *Wesley's* books, for the sake of gain. This will not do. It does by no means look well.

Friday 25. Many young people attended, among others, at *Christeen-bridge*, while I preached from *Eccle. xi. 9. Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart,*  
and

and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things GOD will bring thee into judgment. Deep seriousness sat on the faces of all; and the mouths of many gainsayers were in a great measure stopped.

Saturday 27. Rode to *Bohemia*, and lodged with a Presbyterian elder. The next day preached in the school-house. But these people who profess religion, could scarce be serious during the time of preaching. Mr. B——, and some other great opposers of our doctrine, were present at *Solomon Hersey's*, at three o'clock: I therefore changed my purpose, and preached from John iii. 23. *And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ, and love one another; as he gave us commandment.* And had great hope that it was well received.

Monday 29. Rode twenty miles to *Susquehannah*; and just got in, almost spent, time enough to preach at 3 o'clock. Hitherto the Lord hath helped. Praised, for ever, be his dear and blessed name.

Tuesday, 30. Our quarterly meeting began. After I had preached, we proceeded to business: and in our little conference, the following queries were propounded, viz.

1. Are there no disorderly persons in our classes? It was thought not.

2. Does not dram-drinking too much prevail among our people?

3. Do none contract debts without due care to pay them? We found that this evil is much avoided among our people.

4. Are the band-meetings kept up?

5. Is there nothing immoral in any of our preachers?

6. What preachers travel now, and where are they stationed? It was then urged that none must break our rules, under the penalty of being excluded from our connexion. All was settled in the most amicable manner. Mr. *Strawbridge* preached a good and useful sermon, from Joel ii. 17. *Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, &c.* Many people were present at our love-feast, among whom were some strangers: but all were



deeply serious, and the power of GOD was present indeed. Brother *Owen* preached a very alarming sermon, and brother *Stephenson* gave a moving exhortation. The whole ended in great peace. And we all went, in the strength of the Lord, to our several appointments.

Saturday 3. Preached at *Baltimore*, where we had a comfortable meeting. Lord's day 4. Delivered a funeral discourse, but was much shut up in my mind. Went thence to the *Forest*, and preached at 7 o'clock, with much comfort. Several rich people attended preaching the last three days, and did not seem displeased with the plain truths of the gospel. One or two persons here seem to be groaning for full redemption. My heart is grieved that I have not been entirely devoted to GOD; but have great reason to be thankful, that I feel more and more desire after GOD.

Thursday 8. I left *Baltimore*. *John King* and three exhorters being present, we held a watch-night at *Preslon's*, in which the Lord was powerfully with us.

Friday 9. Preached at *Letton's* with power. But found it a heavy cross, while preaching at *Mr. Giles's*.

Lord's day 11. Preached at *Bohemia*; but the people there seem to be but little affected. Rode thence to *Solomon Hershey's*, where many people attended; and I was enabled to speak with solemnity from Deut. xxx. 19. *I have set before you life and death, &c.* Went thence to *New-Castle*, but found them out of order. Then rode to *Red-Clay Creek*, where I preached with power.

Tuesday 13. Many people came to hear the word, at *Mount-Pleasant*.

Wednesday 14. Came very weary to *Philadelphia*; but the sight of my friends greatly revived me; and all seem to be in peace.

[To be continued in Vol. III.]

## L E T T E R S, &amp;c.

*The Fall and Lamentation of ORIGEN.*

**I**N the reign of the emperor *Dacius*, *Origen* endured great torments for the sake of Christ and the gospel, and was frequently threatened even with death itself.

One day, hearing that some Christians were forcibly carried to an idol-temple to sacrifice, he ran thither to dissuade them from it. When his adversaries saw him, they let go the others, and laid hold on him; putting him to his choice, whether he would offer incense to the idol, or have his body defiled with a woman? As he chose the former, they put incense into his hands; whilst he demurred, they took his hands and caused him to throw it into the fire, and then cried out, *Origen* hath sacrificed! *Origen* hath sacrificed! When this was known to the church, he was excommunicated; and being filled with shame and sorrow, he left *Alexandria*, and came to *Jerusalem*, where he was constrained by importunity to preach to them. He took his Bible, opened it, and the first place he cast his eyes upon was this scripture: *Unto the wicked GOD saith, why dost thou preach my law, and take my covenant into thy mouth?* Psalm l. 16. When he had read these words he sat down and burst out into abundance of tears; the whole congregation weeping with him also; so that he was not able to say any more unto them. After this he wandered up and down in great grief and torment of conscience, and wrote the following lamentation.

“ In the bitterness of grief, I go about to speak unto them, who shall hereafter read this confused writing. But how can I speak, when my tongue is tied up, and my lips dare not once move? My throat also is dried up, and all my senses are polluted with iniquity.

“ O ye saints and blessed of GOD, with waterish eyes and wet cheeks, soaked in sorrow and pain, I beseech you to fall down before the seat of almighty GOD, for me a mis-



miserable sinner, who by reason of my sins, dare not crave aught at the hands of GOD! Wo is me, my mother, that ever thou broughtest me forth! A righteous man, to be conversant in unrighteousness! An heir of the kingdom of GOD, to be an inheritor of the kingdom of satan. A minister, to be found wallowing in impiety! A man beautified with honour and dignity, to be in the end blemished with shame and ignominy! A lofty turret, yet suddenly thrown to the ground! A burning light, yet forthwith darkened! A fruitful tree, yet quickly withered! A running fountain, yet by and by dried up! Wo is me, that ever I was decked with gifts and graces; and now pitifully deprived of all! But who will minister moisture to my head? And who will give streams of tears unto my eyes, that I may bewail myself in this my sorrowful plight! Alas! O my ministry, how shall I lament thee? O all ye my friends, tender my case, and pity my person, that am so dangerously wounded! Pity me, O ye my friends, for that I have now trodden under foot the seal and cognisance of my profession, and joined in league with the devil! Pity me, O ye my friends, for that I am rejected and cast away from before the face of GOD Almighty. There is no sorrow comparable to my sorrow. There is no affliction that exceeds my affliction. No bitterness that passeth my bitterness! No lamentation more lamentable than mine: neither is there any sin greater than mine; and there is no salve for me. Where is that good Shepherd of souls? Where is he that went down from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*, which salved and cured him that was wounded by thieves? Seek me out, O Lord, that am fallen from the higher *Jerusalem*; who have broken the vow which I made in baptism. Alas that ever I was a doctor; and now occupy not the room of a disciple. Thou knowest, O Lord, that I fell against my will; whereas I went about to enlighten others, I darkened myself. When I endeavoured to bring others from death to life, I brought myself from life to death. When I minded to present others before GOD, I presented myself before the devil. When I desired to be found a friend and favour-

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er of godliness, I was found a foe, and a furtherer of iniquity. When I set myself against the assemblies of the wicked, and reprov'd their doings, there found I shame, and the most pestilent wound of the devil. Some promised me that they would be baptized; but after I passed from them, the devil transformed himself into an angel of light, and said unto me, When thou art up in the morning, go and bring them unto GOD. But the devil going before me prepared the way, and I skipping out of my bed at the dawn of day, could not finish my wonted devotion, neither accomplish my usual prayers; desiring that all men might be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. I gat me to those wicked men, and required them to perform the promise made the night before. But I knew not their subtilty, till we came to the place of baptism. O blinded heart, how didst thou not remember! O foolish mind, how didst thou not bethink thyself. But it was the devil that lulled thee asleep, and in the end, slew thy wretched soul. O satan, what hast thou done unto me! How hast thou wounded me! I bewailed sometimes the fall of *Sampson*; but now have fallen worse myself. *Sampson* had his hair cut off; but the crown of glory is fallen from my head. *Sampson* lost the eyes of his body; but my spiritual eyes are put out. It was the wiliness of a woman that brought confusion upon him; but it was my tongue that brought me into this sinful condition.

“Alas! my church liveth; yet I am a widower. My sons are alive; yet I am barren. Every creature rejoiceth; and I alone am desolate and sorrowful. Bewail me, O ye blessed people of GOD, who am banished from GOD. Bewail me, who am shut out of the wedding-chamber of Christ. Bewail me who am abhorred of the angels, and severed from the saints. Who knoweth whether the Lord will have mercy on me, and pity my fall? Whether he will be moved with my desolation? Whether he will have respect to my humiliation, and incline his tender compassion towards me? I will prostrate myself before the threshold and porch of his church, that I may entreat all people, both small  
and



and great, saying unto them, trample and tread me under foot, who am the unfavoury salt ; tread upon me, who have no taste nor favour of GOD ; tread upon me, who am fit for nothing.

“ Now let the elders mourn, for that the staff whereon they leaned is fallen.

“ Now let the young men mourn, for that their school-master is fallen.

“ Now let the virgins mourn, for that the advancer of virginity is defiled.

“ Now let the ministers mourn, for that their patron and defender is shamefully fallen.

“ Wo is me, that I fell so foully ! Wo is me that I fell most dangerously, and cannot rise again ! Assist me, O Holy Spirit, and give me grace to repent : let the fountain of tears be opened, and gush out into streams, to see, if peradventure I may have grace thoroughly to repent, and to wipe out of the book of my conscience, the accusations printed therein against me. But thou, O Lord, think not upon my polluted lips, neither weigh thou the tongue that hath uttered lewd things ; but accept of my repentance and have mercy upon me, and raise me up out of the mire of corruption ; for the puddle thereof hath even choaked me. Wo is me that was sometimes a pearl glittering in the golden garland of glory ; but now am thrown into the dust, and trodden in the mire of contempt. Wo is me, that the salt of GOD now lieth on the dunghill.

“ Now I will address myself unto GOD. Why hast thou lifted me up, and cast me down ? I had not committed this impiety, unless thou hadst withdrawn thine hand from me. But why, O Lord, hast thou shut my mouth by the holy prophet *David* ? Have I been the first that sinned, or am I the first that fell ? Why hast thou forsaken me, being desolate, and banished me from amongst thy saints, and astonished me, when I should preach thy law ? *David* himself, who hath shut up my mouth, sinned too bad in thy sight ; yet upon repentance, thou receivedst him to mercy. *Peter*,  
that

that was a pillar, after his fall, wipes it away with briny tears, not continuing long in the puddle of infidelity.

“ Now, I humbly beseech thee, O Lord, call me back, for that I have trodden a most perilous and destructive way; grant me that good guide and instructor, the Holy Ghost, that I become not the habitation of devils; but that I may tread under foot the devils that trode upon me, and overcoming all his flights, may be again restored to the joys of thy salvation.

“ Now, all ye who behold my wound, tremble for fear, and take heed that ye slumber not, nor fall into the like crime; but rather let us assemble together, and rend our hearts. I mourn, and am sorry at the heart, O ye my friends, that ever I fell.

“ Let the angels lament over me, because of this my dangerous fall.

“ Let the assemblies of saints lament over me, for that I am severed from their blessed societies.

“ Let the holy church lament over me, for that I am woefully declined.

“ Let all the people lament over me, for that I have my death's wound.

“ Bewail me, that am in like case with the reprobate Jews; for this which was said unto them, why dost thou preach my law, &c. now foundeth alike in my ears. What shall I do, that am thus beset with manifest mischiefs. Alas! O death, why dost thou linger? O satan, what mischief hast thou brought unto me? How hast thou pierced my breast with thy poisonous dart? Thinkest thou, that my ruin will avail any thing at all? Thinkest thou, to procure to thyself any ease or rest, whilst I am grievously tormented? Who is able to signify unto thee, whether my sins be wiped and done away? whether I shall not again be coupled with, and made a companion of the saints? O Lord, I fall before thy mercy-seat; have mercy upon me, who mourn thus out of measure, because I have greatly offended! Rid my soul, Lord, from the roaring lion. The assembly of the saints doth make intercession for me, who am an unprofitable



ble servant. Shew mercy, O Lord, to thy wandering sheep, who are subject to the rending teeth of the ravenous wolf! Save me, O Lord, out of his mouth! Let my sackcloth be rent asunder, and gird me with joy and gladness. Let me be again received into the joy of my GOD. Let me be thought worthy of his kingdom, through the earnest petitions of the church, which sorroweth over me, and humbleth herself to Jesus Christ, in my behalf. To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all glory and honour, for ever and ever." Amen.



### A PATTERN for CHRISTIAN WIVES.

**S**T. *Augustine* speaking of his mother *Monica* saith, That she served her husband as her Lord; and that she endeavoured what she could, for the winning of him to the faith: that she patiently sustained the injuries of the bed; and though *Patricius* was of a hot and choleric temper, yet she never made resistance to him in his anger, neither in word nor deed; but sometimes, when she had an opportunity, in his calm humours, she would give him an account of what she had done, and the reasons for it. She would often gravely admonish other women for laying open the faults of their husbands, in familiar discourses with one another; and let them know, that she had a faculty beyond them, in escaping scratched faces and quarrels, under a husband of a much rougher spirit than theirs; that it was never heard, or known by any sign, that *Patricius* had ever beaten his wife, or *Monica* ever quarrelled with her husband. Thus by her patient, prudent behaviour, she at last won him over to the faith. *Aug. Conf.* l. 9. c. 9.

# Poetry.

## CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

**W**HEN pow'rful motives in the soul combine,  
 To teach our firm obedience where to flow,  
 Whene'er a friend can make a claim like thine,  
 On what our love, or what our art can show;  
 'Tis then the heart with sweet submission bows,  
 And freely renders what its pow'r allows.

I thank my honour'd friend, who has enjoin'd  
 This proof of filial, unaffected love;  
 And thus attempt, in artless lays, to find  
 A way, his sympathetic care to move;  
 Fain would I claim his aid to set me right,  
 And pity, equal to my wants, excite.

Oft as I thoughtless rov'd the beaten way,  
 And wildly trod the ever-treach'rous road,  
 Myself the idol of the rising day,  
 Self-love the source whence all my actions flow'd,  
 Oft did the heart-felt tear o'erflow mine eye;  
 And all seem'd gloomy, though I knew not why.

Scarce had ten years their hasty circles run,  
 And infant joys disclos'd their gaudy store,  
 Scarce had my soul the frantic scene begun,  
 But all was tiresome that I priz'd before;  
 Sudden I stopt t' attend the heav'nly call,  
 And only mourn'd my soul's discover'd fall.



Oft when my heart, all anxious and dismay'd,  
 Full keenly felt the bitterness of sin,  
 Sought pensive succour in the lonely shade,  
 Or vainly strove to chase the gloom within;  
 Ev'n then a beam from heav'n would intervene,  
 And peace and joy were for a moment seen.

But, O! how short relief from pungent pain!  
 The day when vanish'd left a double night;  
 The gloom, but heighten'd, overspread again,  
 And all was dark, unfit for war or flight;  
 Exhausted strength, and anguish unredrest,  
 I sunk, all helpless! on the Saviour's breast.

In that glad hour, a gleam of radiant day  
 Dispell'd my fears, and pour'd a stream of light;  
 Joy fill'd my heart! and sorrow fled away!  
 The nights were peaceful, as the days were bright;  
 Fearless of combats, or affliction's blast,  
 I thought *the bitterness of death was past*.

Since then my soul has many a fight endur'd,  
 The toils of war, the cruel tempter's art,  
 The deadly wound of inbred sin uncur'd,  
 The endless mazes of a treach'rous heart;  
 Unequal passions, an unconquer'd will,  
 And all the latent labyrinths of ill.

The world allur'd; too oft my heart pursu'd,  
 And gaz'd, unwatchful of the lurking snare;  
 Oft-times the frowns of heav'n my grief renew'd,  
 Unblest my soul, and uninspir'd my pray'r;  
 I felt the toil, the agonizing strife,  
 And all the conflicts of unsettled life.

Suffice for me, if now the toil is o'er,  
 If grace has now the certain victory gain'd;  
 I give the praise to that Almighty Pow'r,  
 Who gave the conquest, and with love sustain'd

The sinking spirits, and the feeble hand,  
 Fearful to yield, though helpless to withstand.

'Tis now my soul begins *the christian fight*,  
 Striving to live to GOD, she daily dies,  
 Leaves every shadow of terrene delight,  
 And gives her ALL, a whole burnt-sacrifice;  
 Though oft-times fears within, and war around,  
 No pain dismays, when help in GOD is found.

Not that the tempter has forgot his skill,  
 Or fails a moment, seeking to devour;  
 But ever nigh the Lord of hosts I feel,  
 For my defence to exercise his power;  
 Ev'n while I write, I find his guardian care,  
 It keeps my heart, and answers ev'ry pray'r.

Unworthy as I am, his love has giv'n  
 Plenty, and friends, and fellowship of saints;  
 But of the blessings I derive from heav'n  
 (Except the love that quiets my complaints  
 For none with equal gratitude I bend,  
 As for my tender, much-respected friend.

With you I feel, with you I smile, or weep;  
 I feel your sorrows, and I know your care;  
 An equal pace with yours my wishes keep;  
 And on my heart I all your burdens bear;  
 In joy or sorrow I your steps pursue,  
 And think it happiness to follow you.

And must this friend, this crowning gift bestow'd,  
 Be torn for ever from my wishful sight?  
 The gratitude with which my bosom glow'd,  
 Th' obedient love, the reverent delight,  
 Must all the favours that I long have known,  
 But edge the mem'ry of the moments flown.

But,



But, what am I? a thousand voices rise  
 (And duteous children have a right to plead)  
 " Ah, why forget the firm, uniting ties;  
 " The word divine, which you our guide decreed;  
 " Parental love, the heav'n-descended flame,  
 " And all that centres in a father's name?  
  
 " Giv'n to our pray'r, a little longer stay,  
 " And blest our eyes and hearts as heretofore;  
 " O! never leave us, till the closing day  
 " Forbids an added period to implore;  
 " Till life and labour in a moment cease;  
 " When heav'n shall summon, then depart in peace."

Till then, my father, deign to think on me,  
 And offer fervent faith's effectual pray'r;  
 And if I have an interest found with thee,  
 Indulgent King of Heav'n, my heart prepare,  
 Inspire petitions for my guide and friend,  
 Give him in thee the life that cannot end!

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### A S H O R T H Y M N.

I Cor. xv. 44. *It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.*

**A** BODY natural, by food  
 And sleep sustain'd, to death I give;  
 A body spiritual, endued  
 With nobler qualities, receive;

A permanent, ethereal frame,  
 From all material dregs refin'd,  
 Compos'd of pure, angelic flame,  
 And meet for my eternal mind.

T H E

## Arminian Magazine,

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## PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED.

[BY JOHN WESLEY, M. A.]

[Continued from page 425.]

LVI. **N**OW, you are probably thinking of *Esau* and *Pharaoh*. Do you then set it down as an unquestionable truth, that these were eternally condemned, by the *mere sovereign* will of GOD? Are you sure, that they were *eternally* condemned? Even that point is not altogether certain. It is no where affirmed in holy writ: and it would cost you some pains to prove it. It is true, *Pharaoh's* death was a punishment from GOD: but it does not follow, that he was punished everlastingly. And if he was, it was not by the *mere sovereign will of GOD*, but because of his own stubbornness and impenitence.

Of this *Moses* has given us a particular account; accordingly we read, *When Pharaoh saw that there was respite* (after he was delivered from the plague of frogs) *he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them*, *Exod. viii. 15.* So after the plague of flies; *Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go*, *ver. 32.* Again, *When Pharaoh saw that the rain and hail were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants,*  
chap.



chap. ix. 34. After GOD had given him all this space to repent, and had expostulated with him for his obstinate impenitence in those solemn words, *How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me?* chap. x. 3. What wonder is it, if GOD then *hardened his heart*, that is, permitted Satan to harden it: if he at length wholly withdrew his softening grace, and *gave him up to a reprobate mind?*

LVII. The case of *Esau* is widely different from this: although his conduct also is blamable in many points. The first was the selling his birthright to *Jacob*, Gen. xxv. 31, &c. The next, his marrying against his father's consent, chap. xxvi. 34, 35. but it is highly probable he was sensible of his fault; because *Isaac* appears to have been fully reconciled to him, when he said, *My son, make me some savoury meat, that my soul may bless thee before I die*, Gen. xxvii. 4.

In the following verses we have an account of the manner wherein he was supplanted by his brother *Jacob*. Upon *Isaac's* relation of this, *Esau* *cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry*, ver. 34. *and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father!* but he found no place, says the apostle, *for repentance*, for recovering the blessing, though he sought it carefully with tears. Thy brother, said *Isaac*, *bath taken away thy blessing: I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed.* So that all *Esau's* sorrow and tears could not recover his birthright, and the blessing annexed thereto.

And yet there is great reason to hope, that *Esau*, as well as *Jacob*, is now in *Abraham's* bosom. For although for a time he *bated Jacob*, and afterward came against him *with four hundred men*, very probably designing to take revenge for the injuries he had sustained; yet we find, when they met, *Esau ran and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him.* So thoroughly had GOD changed his heart. And why should we doubt but that happy change continued?

LVIII. You can ground no solid objection to this, on St. Paul's words in the epistle to the Romans: *It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger: as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*, chap. ix. 12, 13. For it is undeniably plain, that both these scriptures relate, not to the persons of *Jacob* and *Esau*, but to their descendants; the Israelites sprung from *Jacob*, and the Edomites sprung from *Esau*. In this sense only did *the elder* (*Esau*) *serve the younger*: not in his person (for *Esau* never served *Jacob*;) but in his posterity. The posterity of the elder brother served the posterity of the younger.

The other text referred to by the apostle, runs thus: *I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness*, Mal. i. 2, 3. Whose heritage was it that GOD laid waste? Not that which *Esau* personally enjoyed; but that of his posterity, the Edomites, for their enormous sins, largely described by several of the prophets. So neither is there here any instance of any man being finally condemned, by the mere sovereign will of GOD.

LIX. The *unchangeableness* of GOD we allow likewise. *In him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning*. But you seem to lie under a mistake, concerning this also, for want of observing the scripture-account of it. The scripture teaches, 1. That GOD is unchangeable, with regard to his decrees. But what decrees? The same that he has commanded to be *preached to every creature*, "*He that believeth, shall be saved; he that believeth not, shall be damned*." The scripture teaches, 2. That GOD is unchangeable with regard to his love and hatred. But how? Observe this well; for it is your grand mistake, and the root of almost all the rest. GOD unchangeably loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity. Unchangeably he loveth faith, and unchangeably hateth unbelief. In consequence hereof he unchangeably loveth the righteous, and hateth the workers of iniquity. He unchangeably loves them that believe, and hates wilful, obstinate unbelievers. So that the scripture-account of GOD's unchangeableness, with regard to his  
decrees,



*decrees*, is this: he has unchangeably decreed to save holy believers, and to condemn obstinate, impenitent unbelievers. And, according to scripture, his unchangeableness of affection, properly and primarily regards tempers and not persons: and persons (as *Enoch, Noah, Abraham*) only as those tempers are found in them. Let then the unchangeableness of GOD be put on the right foot, let the scripture be allowed to fix the objects of it, and it will as soon prove transubstantiation, as unconditional Election.

LX. The *faithfulness* of GOD may be termed a branch of his truth. He *will perform* what he *hath promised*. But then let us enquire of the oracle of GOD, to whom the promises are made? the promises of life and immortality? The answer is, *To Abraham and his seed*, that is, to those who *walk in the steps of the faith of their father Abraham*. To those who believe, as believers, are the gospel-promises made. To these has the faithful GOD engaged, that he will do what he hath spoken. *He will fulfil his covenant and promise which he hath made to a thousand generations*: the sum of which is, as we find it expressly declared by the Spirit of GOD, *the Lord will give grace (more grace) and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that live a godly life*.

LXI. This covenant of GOD I understand: but I have heard of another which I understand not. I have heard, “that GOD the Father made a covenant with his Son, “before the world began, wherein the Son agreed to suffer such and such things, and the Father to give him “such and such souls for a recompence: that in consequence of this, those souls *must* be saved, and those only, so that all others *must* be damned.” I beseech you where is this written? In what part of scripture is this covenant to be found? We may well expect a thing of this moment to be revealed very expressly, with the utmost clearness and solemnity! But where is this done? And if it is not done, if there is no such an account in all the bible: what shall we wonder at most, that any serious man should

should advance, or that thousands should believe, so strange an assertion, without one plain text of scripture to support it, from Genesis to the Revelation.

LXII. I suppose you do not imagine, that the bare word *covenant*, if it occurred ever so often in holy writ, is a proof of any such covenant as this. The grand covenant which we allow to be mentioned therein, is a covenant between GOD and man, established in the hand of a mediator, who *tasted death for every man*, and thereby purchased it for all the children of men. The tenor of it (so often mentioned already) is this: “whosoever believeth unto the  
“end, so as to show his faith by his works, I, the Lord,  
“will reward that soul eternally. But whosoever will not  
“believe, and consequently dieth in his sins, I will punish  
“him with everlasting destruction.”

LXIII. To examine thoroughly whether this covenant between GOD and man be unconditional or conditional, it may be needful to go back as far as *Abraham*, the father of the faithful: to enquire what manner of covenant it was, which GOD made with him; and whether any reason be assigned, of GOD’s peculiarly blessing *Abraham*, and all the nations of the earth in him.

The first mention of the covenant between GOD and him, occurs in Gen. xv. 18. “The same day the Lord made a covenant with *Abram*, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land.” But this is much more explicitly related in the seventeenth chapter, ver. 1, &c. “The Lord appeared to *Abram*, and said unto him, I am the Almighty GOD: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And *Abram* fell on his face; and GOD talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called *Abram*, but thy name shall be *Abraham*: for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their ge-



nerations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a GOD unto thee, and to thy seed after thee—Every man-child among you shall be circumcised—it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you—The uncircumcised man-child shall be cut off; he hath broken my covenant.” So we see, this original covenant, though *everlasting*, was conditional, and man’s failing in the condition, cleared GOD.

LXIV. We have St. *Paul*’s account of this covenant of GOD with *Abraham*, in the fourth chapter of his epistle to the Romans, ver. 3, &c. “*Abraham* (saith he) believed GOD, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” (This is related in Gen. xv. 6.) “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision (*i. e. of them that are circumcised*) to them that are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father *Abraham*, which he had being yet uncircumcised.” Now if these words do not express a conditional covenant, certainly none can.

LXV. The nature and ground of this covenant of GOD with *Abraham* is further explained, Gen. xviii. 17, &c. “And the Lord said, Shall I hide from *Abraham* that thing which I do; seeing all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?” For “I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him: and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon *Abraham* that which he hath spoken of him.”

Does GOD say here, *I will do it, because I will?* Nothing less. The reason is explicitly assigned: “All nations shall be blessed in him:” for “he will command his children, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.”

The reason is yet more (clearly, it cannot, but more) fully set down in the twenty-second chapter, ver. 16, &c. "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; BECAUSE thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son; that in blessing I will bless thee—and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed (that is, the Messiah shall spring from thee:) BECAUSE thou hast obeyed my voice."

This is yet again declared, chap. xxvi. ver. 2, &c. "And the Lord appeared unto *Isaac*, and said—Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee: for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will perform the oath which I swore unto *Abraham* thy father. In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed: BECAUSE that *Abraham* obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."

LXVI. This covenant made to *Abraham* and his seed, is mentioned again, Exod. xix. ver. 3, &c. "And the Lord called unto *Moses*, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of *Jacob*, and tell the children of *Israel*, ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, IF ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people."

In the following chapter, GOD declares the terms of the covenant they were to keep, in ten commandments. And these themselves are sometimes termed, the *covenant*; sometimes, *the book of the covenant*. So chap. xxiv. ver. 4, &c. after GOD had made an end of speaking to the people, it is said, "And *Moses* wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning—and he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do. And *Moses* took the blood (of the burnt-offering) and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words."

After



After the people had broken this covenant by worshipping the golden calf, GOD renews it, chap. xxxiv. where we read, ver. 27, 28. “ And the Lord said unto *Moses*, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with *Israel*—And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.”

LXVII. According to the tenor of this covenant, made to *Abraham* and his seed, GOD afterwards declares, Levit. xxvi. ver. 3, &c. “ If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will establish my covenant with you, and I will be your GOD, and ye shall be my people—But if ye will not hearken unto me, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant; I will set my face against you, and I will avenge the quarrel of my covenant—yet if they shall confess their iniquity, and if their uncircumcised hearts be humbled—then will I remember my covenant with *Jacob*, and also my covenant with *Isaac*, and also my covenant with *Abraham* will I remember.” Consequently the covenant with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, was conditional, as well as that with their posterity.

LXVIII. “ But is not the faithfulness of GOD engaged “ to keep all that now believe from falling away?” I cannot say that. Whatever assurance GOD may give to particular souls, I find no general promise in holy writ, “ That “ none who once believes, shall finally fall.” Yet, to say the truth, this is so pleasing an opinion, so agreeable to the flesh and blood, so suitable to whatever of nature remains in those who have tasted the grace of GOD, that I see nothing but the mighty power of GOD, which can restrain any who hears it from closing with it. But still it wants one thing to recommend it, plain, cogent scripture-proof.

[Continued at page 521.]

SERMON

## S E R M O N XXII.

On HEBREWS xiii. 17.

*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch over your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.*

1. **E**XCEEDING few, not only among nominal christians, but among truly religious men, have any clear conception of that important doctrine, which is here delivered by the apostle. Very many scarce think of it, and hardly know that there is any such direction in the bible. And the greater part of those who know it is there, and imagine they follow it, do not understand it, but lean too much either to the right hand or to the left, to one extreme or the other. It is well known to what an extravagant height the Romanists in general carry this direction. Many of them believe an implicit faith is due to the doctrines delivered by those that rule over them; and that implicit obedience ought to be paid to whatever commands they give: and not much less has been insisted on, by several eminent men of the church of *England*. Although it is true that the generality of protestants are apt to run to the other extreme: allowing their pastors no authority at all, but making them both the creatures and the servants of their congregations.

2, But is it not possible to find a medium between these two extremes? Is there any necessity for us to run, either into one or into the other? If we set human laws out of the question, and simply attend to the oracles of GOD, we may certainly discover a middle path in this important matter. In order thereto, let us carefully examine the words of the apostle above recited. Let us consider,

First, Who are the persons mentioned in the text, *they that rule over us?*

Secondly, Who are they whom the apostle directs, to *obey and submit themselves* to them?

Thirdly,



Thirdly, What is the meaning of this direction? In what sense are they to *obey and submit themselves*? I shall then endeavour to make a suitable application of the whole.

I. 1. Consider we, first, Who are the persons mentioned in the text, *they that have the rule over you*? I do not conceive that the words of the apostle are properly translated; because this translation makes the sentence little better than tautology. If they *rule over you*, you are certainly ruled by them: so that according to this translation, you are only enjoined to do what you do already: to obey those whom you do obey. Now there is another meaning of the Greek word, which seems abundantly more proper: it means to *guide*, as well as to rule. And thus, it seems, it should be taken here. The direction then, when applied to our spiritual guides, is plain and pertinent.

2. This interpretation seems to be confirmed by the seventh verse; which fixes the meaning of this. “Remember *them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of GOD.*” The apostle here shews, by the latter clause of the sentence, whom he meant in the former. Those that *were over them*, were the same persons *who spoke unto them the word of GOD*: that is, they were their pastors, those who guided and fed this part of the flock of Christ.

3. But by whom are these guides to be appointed? And what are they supposed to do, in order to be entitled to the obedience which is here prescribed?

Volumes upon volumes have been wrote on that knotty question, “By whom are guides of souls to be appointed?” I do not intend here, to enter at all into the dispute concerning church-government: nor to debate, whether it be advantageous or prejudicial to the interest of true religion, that the church and the state should be blended together, as they have been ever since the time of *Constantine* in every part of the Roman Empire, where christianity has been received. Waving all these points (which may find employment enough for men that abound in leisure) by them that guide you I mean, them that do it, if not by  
your

your choice, at least by your consent: them that you willingly accept of to be your guides, in the way to heaven.

4. But what are they supposed to do, in order to entitle them to the obedience here prescribed?

They are supposed to go before the flock (as is the manner of the eastern shepherds to this day) and to guide them in all the ways of truth and holiness: they are to *nourish them with the words of eternal life*, to feed them with the *pure milk of the word*: applying it continually *for doctrine*, teaching them all the essential doctrines contained therein: *for reproof*, warning them if they turn aside from the way to the right hand or to the left: *for correction*, shewing them how to amend what is amiss, and guiding them back into the way of peace: and *for instruction in righteousness*, training them up in inward and outward holiness, *until they come to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*.

5. They are supposed to *watch over your souls, as those that shall give account*. As those that shall give account! How unspeakably solemn, and awful are these words! May GOD write them upon the heart of every guide of souls!

*They watch, waking* while others sleep, over the flock of Christ; over the souls that he has bought with a price, that he has purchased with his own blood. They have them in their hearts both by day and by night; regarding neither sleep nor food in comparison of them. Even while they sleep, their heart is waking, full of concern for their beloved children. *They watch* with deep earnestness, with uninterrupted seriousness, with unwearied care, patience, and diligence, as they that are about to give an account of every particular soul, to him that standeth at the door, to the Judge of quick and dead.

II. 1. We are, secondly, to consider, Who those are whom the apostle directs to obey them that have the rule over them? And in order to determine this with certainty and clearness, we shall not appeal to human institutions, but simply (as in answering the preceding question) appeal to that decision of it, which we find in the oracles of GOD. Indeed we have hardly occasion to go one step farther



farther than the text itself. Only it may be proper, first, to remove out of the way some popular opinions, which have been almost every where taken for granted, but can in nowise be proved.

2. It is usually supposed, first, That the apostle is here directing *parishioners* to obey and submit themselves to the *minister* of their parish. But can any one bring the least shadow of proof for this from the holy scripture? Where is it written, that we are bound to obey any minister, because we live in what is called his parish? "Yes," you say, "we are bound to *obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.*" True, in all things indifferent; but this is not so: it is exceeding far from it. It is far from being a thing indifferent to *me*, who is the guide of *my* soul. I dare not receive one as my guide to heaven, that is himself in the high road to hell. I dare not take a wolf for my shepherd, that has not so much as sheep's clothing; that is a common swearer, an open drunkard, a notorious sabbath-breaker. And such (the more is the shame, and the more the pity) are many parochial ministers at this day.

3. "But are you not properly members of that congregation, to which your parents belong?" I do not apprehend that I am: I know no scripture that obliges me to this. I owe all deference to the commands of my parents, and willingly obey them in all things lawful. But it is not lawful to *call them Rabbi*, that is, to believe or obey them implicitly. Every one must give an account of himself to GOD. Therefore every man must judge for himself: especially in a point of so deep importance as this is, the choice of a guide for his soul.

4. But we may bring this matter to a short issue, by recurring to the very words of the text. They that have voluntarily connected themselves with such pastors as answer the description given therein: such as do in fact watch over their souls, as they that shall give account: such as do nourish them up with the words of eternal life: such as feed them with the pure milk of the word, and constantly apply it to them for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness: all who  
have

have found and chosen guides of this character, of this spirit and behaviour, are undoubtedly required by the apostle, to *obey and submit themselves* to them.

III. 1. But what is the meaning of this direction? This remains to be considered. In what sense, and how far, does the apostle direct them, to *obey and submit to their spiritual guides*?

If we attend to the proper sense of the two words here used by the apostle, we may observe that the former of them ( $\piείθεισθε$  from  $πείθω$  to persuade) refers to the understanding; the latter,  $υπακούετε$  to the will and outward behaviour. To begin with the former. What influence ought our spiritual guides to have over our understanding? We dare no more call our spiritual fathers Rabbi, than the *fathers of our flesh*. We dare no more yield implicit faith to the former than to the latter. In this sense *one is our Master* (or rather *Teacher*) *who is in heaven*. But whatever submission, of even our understanding, is short of this, we may, nay, we ought to yield to them.

2. To explain this a little farther. St. James uses a word which is nearly allied to the former of these. *The wisdom which is from above, is ευπειθής easy to be convinced, or to be persuaded*. Now if we ought to have and to shew this wisdom toward all men; we ought to have it in a more eminent degree, and to shew it upon every occasion, toward those that *watch over our souls*. With regard to these, above all other men; we should be *easy to be intreated*: easily convinced of any truth, and easily persuaded to any thing that is not sinful.

3. A word of nearly the same import with this, is frequently used by St. Paul; namely,  $\epsilonπεικλής$ . In our translation, it is more than once rendered *gentle*. But perhaps it might be more properly rendered (if the word may be allowed) *yielding*; ready to *yield*, to give up our own will, in every thing that is not a point of duty. This amiable temper every real christian enjoys, and shews in his intercourse with all men. But he shews it in a particular manner, toward those that watch over his soul. He is not only willing to receive any instruction from them, to be convinced



of any thing which he did not know before: to lie open to their advice, and glad to receive admonition or reproof: but is ready to give up his own will, whenever he can do it with a clear conscience. Whatever they desire him to do, he does; if it be not forbidden in the word of GOD. Whatever they desire him to refrain from, he does so; if it be not enjoined in the word of GOD. This is plainly implied in those words of the apostle, *Submit yourselves to them: yield to them: give up your own will.* This is meet, and right, and your bounden duty, if they do indeed watch over your souls, as they that shall give account. If you do thus *obey and submit yourselves to them*, they will give an account of you *with joy; not with groaning*, as they must otherwise do: for although they should be clear of your blood, yet *that would be unprofitable to you*: yea, a prelude of eternal damnation.

How acceptable to GOD was an instance of obedience, somewhat similar to this! You have a large and particular account of it in the thirty-fifth chapter of *Jeremiah*. *The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and give them wine to drink. Then I took the whole house of the Rechabites (all the heads of their families) and set before them pots full of wine, and said unto them, Drink ye wine: but they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab (a great man in the reign of Jehu) the son of Rechab, from whom we are named, being the father of our family, commanded us, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye nor your sons for ever. And we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab our father, in all that he charged us.* We do not know any particular reason why *Jonadab* gave this charge to his posterity. But as it was not sinful, they gave this strong instance of gratitude to their great benefactor. And how pleasing this was to the Father of their spirits, we learn from the words that follow. *And Jeremiah said unto the Rechabites, Because ye have obeyed the voice of Jonadab your father, therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Jonadab shall not want a man, to stand before me for ever.*

5. Now it is certain, christians owe full as much gratitude and obedience, to those that watch over their souls,

as ever the house of the *Rechabites* owed to *Jonadab* the son of *Rechab*. And we cannot doubt, but the Lord is as well-pleased with *our* obedience to these, as ever he was with *their* obedience to *Jonadab*. If he was so well-pleased with the gratitude and obedience of this people to their temporal benefactor, have we not all reason to believe, He is full as well-pleased with the gratitude and obedience of christians, to those who derive far greater blessings to them, than ever *Jonadab* conveyed to his posterity?

6. It may be of use, yet again to consider, In what instances is it the duty of christians to obey and submit themselves to those that watch over their souls. Now the things which they enjoin, must be either enjoined of GOD, or forbidden by him, or indifferent. In things forbidden of GOD we dare not obey them; for we are to obey GOD rather than man. In things enjoined of GOD, we do not properly obey Them, but our common Father. Therefore if we are to obey them at all, it must be in things indifferent. The sum is, It is the duty of every private christian, to obey his spiritual pastor, by either doing, or leaving undone, any thing of an indifferent nature; any thing that is in no way determined in the word of GOD.

7. But how little is this understood in the *protestant* world? At least, in *England* and *Ireland*? Who is there, even among those that are supposed to be good christians, who dreams there is such a duty as this? And yet there is not a more express command, either in the old or the new testament. No words can be more clear and plain: no command more direct and positive. Therefore certainly none who receive the scripture as the word of GOD, can live in the habitual breach of this, and yet plead innocence. Such an instance of wilful, or at least careless disobedience, must grieve the Holy Spirit of GOD. It cannot but hinder the grace of GOD from having its full effect upon the heart. It is not improbable, that this very disobedience may be one cause of the deadness of many souls: one reason of their not receiving those blessings, which they seek with some degree of sincerity.

8. It



8. It remains only, to make a short application of what has now been delivered.

You that read this, do you apply it to yourself? Do you examine yourself thereby? Do not *you* stop your own growth in grace, if not by wilful disobedience to this command; yet by a careless inattention to it, by not considering it, as the importance of it deserves? If so, you defraud yourself of many blessings, which you might enjoy. Or, are you of a better mind, of a more excellent spirit? Is it your fixt resolution and your constant endeavour, *to obey them that have the rule over you in the Lord?* To submit yourself as cheerfully to your spiritual, as to your natural parents? Do you ask, “Wherein should I submit to them?” The answer has been given already: not in things enjoined of GOD: not in things forbidden by him; but in things indifferent: in all that are not determined one way or the other, by the oracles of GOD. It is true, this cannot be done in some instances, without a considerable degree of self-denial, when they advise you to refrain from something that is agreeable to flesh and blood. And it cannot be obeyed in other instances, without taking up your cross: without suffering some pain or inconvenience, that is not agreeable to flesh and blood. For that solemn declaration of our Lord has place here, as well as on a thousand other occasions, *Except a man deny himself, and take up his cross daily, he cannot be my disciple.* But this will not affright you, if you resolve to be, not only almost, but altogether a christian: if you determine to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

9. I would now apply myself in a more particular manner to *you*, who desire *me* to watch over your souls. Do *you* make it a point of conscience to *obey me* for my Master's sake? To *submit yourselves to me* in things indifferent; things not determined in the word of GOD? In all things that are not enjoined, nor yet forbidden in scripture? Are you *easy to be intreated*, as by men in general, so *my me* in particular? Easy to be convinced of any truth, however contrary to your former prejudices? And easy to be persuaded to do or forbear any indifferent thing at *my* desire? You cannot

cannot but see, that all this is clearly contained in the very words of the text. And you cannot but acknowledge, that it is highly reasonable for you so to do, if I do employ all my time, all my substance, all my strength both of body and soul, not in seeking my own honour, or pleasure; but in promoting your present and eternal salvation: if I do indeed *watch over your souls as one that must give account.*

10. Do you then take my advice (I ask in the presence of GOD and all the world) with regard to *dress*? I published that advice above thirty years ago: I have repeated it a thousand times since. I have advised you not to be conformable to the world herein: to lay aside all needless ornaments; to avoid all needless expence; to be patterns of plainness to all that are round about you. Have you taken this advice? Have you all, men and women, young and old, rich and poor, laid aside all those needless ornaments, which I particularly objected to? Are you all exemplarily plain in your apparel? As plain as Quakers (so called) or Moravians? If not, if you are still dressed like the generality of people of your own rank and fortune, you declare hereby to all the world, that you will not obey them that are over you in the Lord. You declare, in open defiance of GOD and man, that you will not *submit yourselves* to them. Many of you carry your sins on your forehead, openly and in the face of the sun. You harden your hearts against instruction and against conviction: you harden one another: especially those of you that were once convinced, and have now stifled your convictions. You encourage one another, to stop your ears against the truth, and shut your eyes against the light, lest haply you should see, that you are fighting against GOD, and against your own souls. If I were now called to give an account of you, it would be *with groans, and not with joy.* And sure that would be *unprofitable for you*: the loss would fall upon your own head.

11. I speak all this on supposition (though that is a supposition not to be made) that the bible was silent on this head: that the scripture said nothing concerning *dress*, and left it to every one's own discretion. But if all other texts were silent, this is enough, *Submit yourselves to them that are*



*ever you in the Lord.* I bind this upon your consciences, in the sight of GOD. Were it only in obedience to this direction, you cannot be clear before GOD, unless you throw aside all needless ornaments, in utter defiance of that tyrant of fools, fashion; unless you seek only to be adorned with good works, as men and women professing godliness.

12. Perhaps you will say, “ This is only a little thing: it is a mere trifle.” I answer, If it be, you are the more inexcusable before GOD and man. What! Will you disobey a plain commandment of GOD for a *mere trifle*? GOD forbid! Is it a trifle to sin against GOD? To set his authority at nought? Is this a little thing? Nay, remember, There can be no little sin, till we can find a little god! Mean time be assured of one thing: the more conscientiously you obey your spiritual guides, the more powerfully will GOD apply the word, which they speak in his name, to your heart! The more plentifully will he water what is spoken, with the dew of his blessing: and the more proofs will you have, it is not only they that speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaketh in them.

*Bristol, March 18, 1785.*

## AN EXTRACT

Of the Revd. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 443.]

SUFFER me now, to tell you *my* principles in this matter. I look upon *all the world* as *my parish*; thus far I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know GOD has called me to. And sure I am, that his blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I therefore to be faithful in fulfilling the work he hath given me to do. His servant I am, and as such am employed (glory be to him) day and night in his service. I am employed according to the plain direction of his word, *as I have opportunity of doing good unto all men*. And his providence clearly concurs with his word; which has disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, *and go about doing good*.

If you ask, "How can this be? How can one do good, of whom *men say all manner of evil*?" I will put you in mind (though you once knew this, yea, and much established me in that great truth) the more evil men say of me for my Lord's sake, the more good will he do by me. That it is *for his sake* I know and he knoweth, and the event agreeth thereto; for he mightily confirms the words I speak, by the Holy Ghost given unto those that hear them. O my friend, my heart is moved toward you. I fear, you have herein made shipwreck of the faith. I fear, *Satan, transformed into an angel of light*, hath assaulted you, and prevailed also. I fear, that offspring of hell, *worldly or mystic prudence*, has drawn you away from the simplicity of the gospel. How else could you ever conceive, that the being reviled and *hated of all men*, should make us less fit for our Master's service? How else could you ever think, of *saving yourself and them that hear you*, without being the *filth*  
and



and off-scouring of the world? To this hour, is this scripture true. And I therein rejoice, yea, and *will* rejoice. Blessed be GOD, I enjoy the reproach of Christ! O may you also be vile, exceeding vile for his sake! GOD forbid that you should ever be other than *generally* scandalous. I had almost said, *universally*. If any man tell you, there is a new way of following Christ, *he is a liar and the truth is not in him*.

*I am, &c.*

*Wednesday 13.* In the morning I came to *London*, and after receiving the holy communion at *Islington*, I had once more an opportunity of seeing my mother, whom I had not seen since my return from *Germany*.

I cannot but mention an odd circumstance here. I had read her a paper in *June* last year, containing a short account of what had passed in my own soul, till within a few days of that time. She greatly approved it, and said, "She heartily blessed GOD, who had brought me to so just a way of thinking." While I was in *Germany*, a copy of that paper was sent (without my knowledge) to one of my relations. He sent an account of it to my mother; whom I now found under strange fears concerning me, being convinced by "*an account taken from one of my own papers*, that I had greatly erred from the faith." I could not conceive, what paper that should be; but on enquiry found it was the same I had read her myself.—How hard is it to form a true judgment of any person or thing, from the account of a prejudiced relater! Yea, though he be ever so honest a man: for he who gave this relation, was one of unquestionable veracity. And yet by his *sincere* account of a writing which lay before his eyes, was the truth so totally disguised, that my mother knew not the paper she had heard from end to end, nor I that I had myself wrote.

At 6 I warned the women at *Fetter-lane* (knowing how they had been lately shaken) *not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits, whether they were of GOD*. Our brethren met at 8, when it pleased GOD to remove many misunderstandings

derstandings and offences that had crept in among them: and to restore in good measure *the spirit of love and of a sound mind.*

*Thursday 14.* I went with Mr. *Whitefield* to *Blackheath*, where were, I believe, twelve or fourteen thousand people. He a little surpris'd me, by desiring me to preach in his stead; which I did (though nature recoiled) on my favourite subject, *Jesus Christ, who of GOD is made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*

I was greatly moved with compassion for the rich that were there, to whom I made a particular application. Some of them seem'd to attend, while others drove away their coaches from so uncouth a preacher.

*Friday 15.* I had much talk with one who is called a Quaker. But he could not receive my saying. I was *too strict* for him, and talk'd of *such a perfection*, as he could not think *necessary*: being perswaded, *there was no harm* in costly apparel, provided it was plain and grave: nor in putting scarlet or gold upon *our houses*, so it were not upon *our clothes.*

In the evening I went to a society at *Wapping*, weary in body, and faint in spirit. I intended to speak on *Romans iii. 19.* but could not tell how to open my mouth: and all the time we were singing, my mind was full of some place, I knew not where, in the epistle to the *Hebrews*. I begg'd GOD to direct, and opened the book on *Heb. x. 19.* *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; —let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* While I was earnestly inviting all sinners to enter into the holiest by this new and living way, many of those that heard, began to call upon GOD, with strong cries and tears. Some sunk down, and there remained no strength in them; others exceedingly trembled and quaked; some were torn with a kind of convulsive motion in every part of their bodies, and that so violently that often four or five persons could not hold one



of them. I have seen many hysterical and many epileptic fits; but none of them were like these, in many respects. I immediately prayed, "that GOD would not suffer those who were weak to be offended." But one woman was greatly; being sure "*they might help it* if they would, no one should persuade her to the contrary;" and was got three or four yards, when she also dropt down in as violent an agony as the rest. Twenty-six of those who had been much affected (most of whom, during the prayers which were made for them, were in a moment filled with peace and joy) promised to call upon me the next day. But only eighteen came; by talking closely with whom I found reason to believe, that some of them had gone home to their house, justified. The rest seemed to be patiently waiting for it.

*Saturday 16.* We met at *Fetter-lane*, to humble ourselves before GOD, and own he had justly withdrawn his Spirit from us, for our manifold unfaithfulness. We acknowledged our having grieved him by our divisions, *one saying, I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos*: by our leaning again to our own works, and trusting in them, instead of Christ: by our resting in those little beginnings of sanctification, which it had pleased him to work in our souls: and above all, by blaspheming his work among us, imputing it either to nature, to the force of imagination and animal spirits, or even to the delusion of the devil. In that hour, we found GOD with us as at the first. Some fell prostrate upon the ground. Others burst out, as with one consent, into loud praise and thanksgiving. And many openly testified, there had been no such day as this, since *January* the 1st preceding.

*Sunday 17.* I preached at 7 in *Upper Moorfields*, to (I believe) six or seven thousand people, on, *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters*. In the afternoon, I saw poor R—— T——, who had left our society, and the church. We did not dispute, but pray; and in a short space the scales fell off from his eyes. He gladly returned to the church, and was in the evening re-admitted into our society.

At

At 5 I preached on *Kennington-Common*, to about fifteen thousand people, on those words, *Look unto him, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.*

Monday 18. I left *London* early in the morning, and the next evening reached *Bristol*, and preached (as I had appointed, if GOD should permit) to a numerous congregation. My text now also was, *Look unto him, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.* *Howel Harris* called upon me an hour or two after. He said, “ he had been much dissuaded from either hearing or seeing me, by many who said all manner of evil of me. But (said he) as soon as I heard you preach, I quickly found what spirit you was of. And before you had done, I was so overpowered with joy and love, that I had much ado to walk home.”

It is scarce credible, what advantage Satan had gained, during my absence of only eight days. Disputes had crept into our little society, so that the love of many was already waxed cold. I shewed them the state they were in the next day (both at *Newgate* and at *Baptist-Mills*) from those words, *Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.* And when we met in the evening, instead of reviving the dispute, we all betook ourselves to prayer. Our Lord was with us. Our divisions were healed. Misunderstandings vanished away. And all our hearts were sweetly drawn together, and united as at the first.

Friday 22. I called on one who *did run well*, till he was hindered by some of those called, *French prophets.* *Wo unto the prophets, saith the Lord, who prophesy in my name, and I have not sent them.* At *Weavers-Hall*, I endeavoured to point them out, and earnestly exhorted all that followed after holiness, to avoid as fire, all who do not speak according to the law and the testimony.

In the afternoon I preached at the *Fish-Ponds*, but had no life or spirit in me; and was much in doubt, whether GOD would not lay me aside, and send other labourers into his harvest. I came to the society full of this thought; and began in much weakness to explain, *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of GOD.*

I told



I told them, "they were not to judge of the spirit whereby any one spoke, either by *appearances*, or by *common report*, or by their own *inward feelings*. No, nor by any dreams, visions, or revelations, supposed to be made to their souls, any more than by their tears, or any involuntary effects wrought upon their bodies." I warned them, "all these were in themselves of a doubtful, disputable nature: they *might* be from GOD; and they *might not*; and were therefore not simply to be relied on (any more than simply to be condemned) but to be tried by a farther rule, to be brought to the only certain test, the law and the testimony." While I was speaking, one before me dropt down as dead, and presently a second and a third. Five others sunk down in half an hour, most of whom were in violent agonies. *The pains as of hell came about them; the snares of death overtook them.* In their trouble we called upon the Lord, and he gave us an answer of peace. One indeed continued an hour in strong pain; and one or two more for three days. But the rest were greatly comforted in that hour, and went away rejoicing and praising GOD.

*Saturday 23.* I spoke severally with those who had been so troubled the night before. Some of them, I found, were only convinced of sin; others had indeed found rest to their souls. This evening another was seized with strong pangs. But in a short time her soul also was delivered.

*Sunday 24.* As I was riding to *Rose-Green*, in a smooth, plain part of the road, my horse suddenly pitched upon his head, and rolled over and over. I received no other hurt than a little bruise on one side, which for the present I felt not, but preached without pain to six or seven thousand people on that important direction, *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of GOD.* In the evening a girl of thirteen or fourteen, and four or five other persons, some of whom had felt the power of GOD before, were deeply convinced of sin, and with sighs and groans which could not be uttered, called upon GOD for deliverance.

*Monday*

*Monday 25.* About 10 in the morning, *J—e C—r*, as she was sitting at work, was suddenly seized with grievous terrors of mind, attended with strong trembling. Thus she continued all the afternoon; but at the society in the evening GOD turned her heaviness into joy. Five or six others were also cut to the heart this day; and soon after found him *whose hands make whole*: as did one likewise, who had been mourning many months, without any to comfort her.

*Tuesday 26.* I preached near the house we had a few days before began to build for a school, in the middle of *Kingswood*, under a little sycamore-tree, during a violent storm of rain, on those words, *As the rain cometh down from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud:—So shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void. But it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it.*

Three persons terribly felt the wrath of GOD abiding on them, at the society this evening. But upon prayer made in their behalf, he was pleased soon to lift up the light of his countenance upon them.

*Friday 29.* I preached in a part of *Kingswood*, where I never had been before. The places in *Kingswood* where I now usually preached were these; once a fortnight, a little above *Connam*, a village on the south side of the wood; on *Sunday* morning, near *Hannam-Mount*: once a fortnight, at the school-house, in the middle of *Kingswood*. On *Sunday* in the evening at *Rose-Green*; and once a fortnight near the *Fish-Ponds*, on the north side of the wood.

*Saturday 30.* At *Weavers-Hall*, seven or eight persons were constrained to roar aloud, while the sword of the Spirit was *dividing asunder their souls and spirits, and joints and marrow*. But they were all relieved upon prayer, and sang *praises unto our GOD and unto the Lamb that liveth for ever and ever*.

I gave a particular account, from time to time, of the manner wherein GOD here carried on his work to those whom I believed to desire the increase of his kingdom,  
with



with whom I had any opportunity of corresponding. Part of the answer, which I received (some time after) from one of these I cannot but here subjoin.

**I** DESIRE to bless my Lord, for the good and great news your letter bears, about the Lord's turning many souls *from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto GOD*; and that such a great and effectual door is opened among you, as the many adversaries cannot shut. O may he that hath the keys of the house of David, that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth, set the door of faith more and more open among you, till his house be filled, and till he gather together the outcasts of *Israel*. And may that prayer for the adversaries be heard, *fill their faces with shame, that they may seek thy name, O Lord*.

As to the outward manner you speak of, wherein most of them were affected who were cut to the heart by the sword of the Spirit, no wonder that this was at first surprising to you, since they are indeed so very rare, that have been thus pricked and wounded. Yet some of the instances you give, seem to be exemplified in the outward manner wherein *Paul* and the jailer were at first affected: as also *Peter's* hearers, *Acts* ii. The last instance you gave, of some struggling as in the agonies of death, and in such a manner as that four or five strong men can hardly restrain a weak woman from hurting herself or others: this is to me somewhat more inexplicable: if it do not resemble the child spoken of, *Mark* ix. 26. and *Luke* ix. 42. Of whom it is said, that *while he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down and tare him*. Or what influence sudden and sharp awakenings may have upon the body I pretend not to explain. But I make no question, Satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to hinder the good work in the persons who are thus touched with the sharp arrows of conviction, and partly to disparage the work of GOD, as if it tended to lead people to distraction.—However, the merciful issue of these conflicts

facts in the conversion of the persons thus affected, is the main thing.

When they are brought by the saving arm of GOD to receive Christ Jesus, to have joy and peace in believing, and then to walk in him, and give evidence that the work is a saving work at length, whether more quickly or gradually accomplished, there is great matter of praise.—

All the outward appearances of people's being affected among us, may be reduced to these two sorts; one is, hearing with a close, silent attention, with gravity and greediness, discovered by fixed looks, weeping eyes, and sorrowful or joyful countenances: another sort is, when they lift up their voice aloud, some more depressedly, and others more highly; and at times, the whole multitude in a flood of tears, all as it were crying out at once, till their voice be ready to drown the minister's, that he can scarce be heard for the weeping noise that surrounds him.—The influence on some of these, like a land-flood, dries up; we hear of no change wrought. But in others, it appears in the fruits of righteousness, and the tract of a holy conversation.—

May the Lord strengthen you to go on in his work! and in praying for the coming of his kingdom with you and us, and I hope you shall not be forgotten among us, in our joint applications to the throne of grace.

*I am, reverend, and dear Sir,*

*Your very affectionate Brother and Servant in Christ,*

*R. E.*

[Continued at page 538.]

#### THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

#### THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[Continued from page 453.]

“IT would have remained a secret in this kingdom, even to his most intimate friends, that he was of so great a family, had not Mr. Ireland gone over with him to Switzerland:



*Switzerland*: where he was surpris'd to find Mr. *Fletcher's* relations some of the first people in the country.

“ *Blessed are they that mourn*, said the Lord Jesus. And this blessedness was as certainly his as the former. He was a man of a serious spirit, one that stood at the utmost distance from levity of every kind. Though he was constantly cheerful, as rejoicing in hope of his heavenly inheritance, yet had he too deep a sense of his own wants, and the wants of the church of GOD, as also of the sins and miseries of mankind, to be at any time light or trifling. I have a letter before me (dated Dec. 1771) which at once gives us a picture of his seriousness, watchfulness, and earnestness; and contains advices well deserving the consideration of all that fear GOD.—“ There is undoubtedly,” said he, “ such a thing as the *full assurance of faith*. Be not discouraged on account of thousands who stop short of it: it is our own fault, if we do not attain.—GOD would give us ample satisfaction if we did but deeply feel our wants. Both you and I want a deeper awakening, which will produce a death to outward things and speculative knowledge. Let us shut our eyes to the gilded clouds without us: let us draw inward, and search after GOD, if haply we may find him. Let us hold our confidence, though we are often constrained against hope to believe in hope. But let us not rest in our confidence, as thousands do: let it help us to struggle and wait, till he come. Let us habituate ourselves to live inwardly. This will solemnize us, and prevent our trifling with the things of GOD. We may be thankful for what we have without resting in it. We may strive, and yet not trust in our striving, but expect all from divine grace.”

“ Four or five years after, he says, “ I send this to enquire after your welfare, and to let you know, that though I am pretty well in body, yet I break fast. But I want to break faster in my spirit than I do. Yet, blessed be GOD, I have been in such pinching, grinding circumstances for near a year, by a series of providential and domestic trials, as have given me some deadly blows. I am not without hope of setting my eyes on you once more. Mr. *Wesley* kindly,

kindly invites me to travel with him, and visit some of the societies. I feel an inclination to break one of my chains, parochial retirement, which may be a nest for self-indulgence. I leave the matter entirely to the Lord."

"Mean time he *mourned*, not only for himself and his friends, but also for the church of GOD. "The few professors," says he, "which I see in these parts, are so far from what I wish them to be, that I cannot but cry out, Lord, how long wilt thou give thy heritage up to desolation? How long shall the heathen say, *Where is now their (indwelling) GOD?*" In another letter (dated May 8, 1776) he writes, "I see so little fruit in these parts, that I am almost disheartened. I am closely followed with the thought, that faith in the dispensation of the Spirit is at a very low ebb. But it may be better in other places. I shall be glad to travel a little, to see the goodness of the land. May GOD make and keep us humble, loving, disinterested, and zealous."

"These quotations give us not only an example of *holy mourning*, but likewise of *hungering and thirsting after righteousness*. In this he was peculiarly worthy our imitation. He never rested in any thing he had either experienced or done in spiritual matters. *But this one thing he did: forgetting those things that were behind, and reaching forth unto those things which were before, he pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of GOD in Christ Jesus*: he was a true christian racer, always on the stretch for higher and better things. Though his attainments, both in experience and usefulness, were above the common standard, yet the language of his conversation and behaviour always was, *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfected; but I follow after, if by any means I may apprehend That, for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus*. He had his eye upon a full conformity to the Son of GOD, or what the apostle terms, *The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*. Nor could he be satisfied with any thing less.

"And he was *meek*, like his Master, as well as *lowly in heart*. Not that he was so by nature, but of a fiery, passi-



onate spirit. But so thoroughly had grace subdued nature, so fully was he renewed in the spirit of his mind, that for many years before his death, I believe he was never observed by any one, friend or foe, to be out of temper. And yet he did not want provocation, and that sometimes in a high degree, especially from those whose religious sentiments he thought it his duty to oppose. One of these, who once loved him so well, as to be ready to pull out his eyes for him, was so exasperated on reading his second Check, that he wrote to him in the most bitter terms. But none of these things moved him; no, not in the least degree. The keenest word he used upon the occasion was, "What a world, what a religious world we live in!"

"Hence arose his readiness to bear with the weaknesses, and forgive the faults of others: the more remarkable, considering his flaming zeal against sin, and deep concern for the glory of GOD. Such hatred to sin, and such love to the sinner I never saw joined together before. This very circumstance convinced me of the height of his grace, bearing so much of his Master's image, whose hatred to sin and love to sinners are equally infinite. He took all possible pains to detect what was evil, in any of those that were under his care; pursuing it through all its turnings and windings, and stripping it of all its disguises. Yet none so ready to excuse, when it was confessed, and to conceal it, even from his most intimate friends.

"He never mentioned the faults of an absent person, unless absolute duty required it. And then he spoke with the utmost tenderness, extenuating, rather than aggravating. None could draw his picture more exactly than St. Paul has done, in the thirteenth of the first epistle to the Corinthians. Every feature in that masterly piece of apostolic painting was found in him. Let all that knew him, especially his intimate friends, recollect the spirit and behaviour of this servant of the GOD of Love; and then let them judge whether I exaggerate when I say, *He suffered long and was kind: he envied not: acted not rashly; was not puffed up; did not behave himself unseemly; sought not his own, was not easily provoked. He thought no evil, rejoiced not in iniquity,*

*iniquity, but rejoiced in the truth. He covered all things, believed all things, hoped all things, and endured all things. It would be easy to enlarge on all these particulars, and shew how they were exemplified in him. But waving this, I would only observe, that with regard to two of them, kindness to others; and not seeking his own, he had few equals. His kindness to others was such, that he bestowed his all upon them: his time, his talents, his substance. His knowledge, his eloquence, his health, his money, were employed day by day for the good of mankind. He prayed, he wrote, he preached, he visited the sick and well, he conversed, he gave, he laboured, he suffered, winter and summer, night and day: he endangered, nay, destroyed his health, and in the end gave his life also for the profit of his neighbours, that they might be saved from everlasting death. He denied himself even such food as was necessary for him, that he might have to give to them that had none. And when he was constrained to change his manner of living, still his diet was plain and simple. And so were his clothing and furniture, that he might save all that was possible for his poor neighbours.*

“ *He sought not his own in any sense, not his own honour, but the honour of GOD in all he said or did: he sought not his own interest, but the interest of his Lord, spreading knowledge, holiness, and happiness as far as he possibly could. He sought not his own pleasure, but studied to please all men for their good to edification: and to please Him that had called him to his kingdom and glory. And yet it is certain, he found the greatest pleasure, in pleasing GOD and his neighbour. For nothing could give an higher delight than this, to his pious and benevolent mind.*

“ *In the mean time he was a man of peace, and spared no pains to restore it where it was broken. He gave numberless proofs of this amiable disposition. “ When we were at Trevecka (to mention but one instance) two of the students were bitterly prejudiced against each other. He took them into a room by themselves, reasoned with them, wept over them, and at last prevailed. Their hearts were broken;*



broken; they were melted down: they fell upon each other's necks and wept aloud."

"The pains which he took to make peace at the *Leeds* conference, will not easily be forgotten. And although he could not prevail so far as might have been desired, yet his labour was not in vain,

"But I do not attempt his full character. I will only add, what the apostle recommends to the Philippians, was exactly copied by him. He was *blameless and harmless, a son of GOD, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation: shining among them as a light in the world.*"

17. I think one talent wherewith GOD had endued Mr. *Fletcher*, has not been sufficiently noted yet. I mean his *courtesy*; in which there was not the least touch either of art or affectation. It was pure and genuine, and sweetly constrained him to behave to every one (although particularly to inferiors) in a manner not to be described: with so inexpressible a mixture of humility, love, and respect. This directed his words, the tone of his voice, his looks, his whole attitude, his every motion. This seems to be intended by St. *Paul*, in those words, *οὐκ ἄσχημονες*. Not so well expressed in our translation by, *behaveth not itself unseemly*. Do not the words literally mean, *Is not ill-bred?* Behaves on all occasions with decency and good-breeding? Certainly so did Mr. *Fletcher*. Never did any man more perfectly suit his whole behaviour to the persons and the occasion. So that one might apply to him with great propriety the words of the ancient poet,

Illum quicquid agit, quoquo vestigia tendit  
Componit furtim subsequiturq; Decor.

I cannot translate this: but I can give the English reader a parallel, and more than a parallel,

Grace was in all his steps, heaven in his eye,  
In all his gestures sanctity and love."

## C H A P. X.

*His Death.*

“SOME time before he was taken ill (says Mrs. Fletcher) he mentioned to me a peculiar manifestation of love, which he received in his own house, with the application of those words, *Thou shalt walk with me in white*. He added, It is not a little thing, so to hang upon GOD by faith, as to feel no departure from him, and no rising in the heart against him. But this does not satisfy me. I often feel something far beyond this. Yea, I sometimes find such gleams of light and love, such wafts, as it were of the heavenly air! so powerful as if they would just then take my soul with them to glory. But *I am not filled*. I want to be filled with all the fulness of GOD. In conformity to these sentiments, when he was in his last illness, he expressed himself thus, “*I am filled*, most sweetly filled.” This conveyed much to my mind, as I understood by it the accomplishment of his large desires.

“Some time before the beginning of his last sickness, he was peculiarly penetrated with the nearness of eternity. There was scarce an hour in which he was not calling upon us, to drop every thought and every care, that we might attend to nothing, but the drinking deeper into GOD. We spent much time in wrestling with GOD, and were led in a peculiar manner, to abandon our whole selves, our souls and bodies into the hands of GOD; ready to do, and willing to suffer whatever was well-pleasing to him.

“And now the time drew near, when his faith was to be called to its last grand exercise: that, eyeing his Lord, he might

True in the fiery trial prove,  
And pay him back his dying love.

A little before, being on his knees in prayer for light whether he \* should go to *London* or not? The answer to him seemed

\* I verily believe, if he had then gone to *London*, he would have been alive at this day. But I blame no one for thinking otherwise.



seemed to be, "Not to *London*, but to thy grave." When he acquainted me with this, he said, with a heavenly smile, "Satan would represent it to me as something dreadful, enforcing those words, *The cold grave! the cold grave!*" On the Sunday following (I think it was the next day) that anthem was sung in the church, *The Lord is my shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing. He shall feed me in green pastures, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort. He shall convert my soul, and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea; though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff shall comfort me. Thou shalt prepare a table before me, against them that trouble me. Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.*

"In his return home, he observed in how uncommon a degree those words had been blest to his soul. And from that very time, I do not remember to have seen in him the least marks of temptation. He shewed an unusual cheerfulness and liveliness in every part of his work; and seemed to increase in strength of body, as well as in strength of soul. Truly it was to him according to his faith. He *feared no evil*. And *his cup was filled* with righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

"On Thursday, August 4, he was employed in the work of GOD from 3 in the afternoon till 9 at night. When he came home, he said, "I have taken cold;" but seemed not to regard it. He was far from well on Friday and Saturday; but was uncommonly drawn out in prayer. On Saturday night he was abundantly worse, and his fever appeared very strong. I begged that he would by no means think of going to church in the morning. But he told me, it was the will of the Lord: in which case I never dared to persuade. In reading prayers he was very near fainting away. I got through the crowd, and intreated him to come out of the desk. But he let me and others know, in his sweet manner, that we were not to interrupt the order of GOD. I then silently retired to my pew, where all around me were in tears. When the windows were opened, by  
which

which he appeared to be a little refreshed, he went on: and then preached with a strength and recollection that surprised us all.

“ After sermon he walked up to the communion-table, uttering these words, “ I am going to throw myself under the wings of the cherubim, before the mercy-seat.” The service lasted till near two. Sometimes he was constrained to stop; being hardly able to stand upon his feet. The people were deeply affected, which they were not able to conceal: groans and weeping were on every side. Gracious Lord! how was it my soul was kept so calm, in the midst of the most tender feelings. Notwithstanding his extreme weakness, he gave out several verses of hymns, and lively sentences of exhortation. As soon as ever the service was over, we hurried him to bed. When he lay down, nature being quite exhausted, he immediately fainted away. He afterwards dropt into a sleep for some time, and on waking, cried out with a pleasant smile, “ Now, my dear, thou seest I am no worse for doing the Lord’s work. He never fails me when I trust in him.” Having eat a little dinner, he dozed most of the evening: now and then waking, with the praises of GOD in his mouth. At night his fever returned: but it was not violent; and yet his strength decreased amazingly. On Monday and Tuesday we had a little paradise together. He lay on a couch in the study: and though often changing posture, was sweetly pleasant, and frequently slept a good while together. When he was awake, he delighted in hearing me read hymns, and treatises on faith and love. His words were all animating, and his patience beyond expression. When he had a very nauseous medicine to take, he seemed to enjoy the cross: according to a word, which he was used often to repeat, “ We are to seek a perfect conformity to the will of GOD; and leave him to give us pleasure or pain, as it seemeth him good.”

“ I asked him, whether he had any advice to leave me, if he should be taken from me? He replied, “ I have nothing particular to say: the Lord will open all before thee.” I said, Have you any conviction, that GOD is about to  
take



take you? He said, "No: not in particular. Only I always see death so inexpressibly near, that we both seem to stand on the verge of eternity." While he slept a little, I besought the Lord, if it was his good pleasure, to spare him to me a little longer. But my prayer seemed to have no wings: and I could not help mingling continually therewith, Lord, give me perfect resignation! This uncertainty made me tremble, lest GOD was going to put into my hands the bitter cup with which he lately threatened my husband. Some weeks before, I myself was ill of a fever, and not without danger. My husband then felt the whole parting scene, and struggled for perfect resignation. He said, "O Polly, shall I ever see the day, when thou must be carried out to bury! How will the little things which thy tender care has prepared for me in every part of the house, wound and distress me? How is it? I think I feel jealousy! I am jealous of the worms! I seem to shrink at the thought of giving my dear Polly to the worms."

"Now all these reflections returned upon my heart with the weight of a millstone. I cried to the Lord, and these words were deeply impressed on my spirit, *Where I am, there shall my servants be, that they may behold my glory.* This promise was full of comfort to my soul. I saw that in Christ's immediate presence was our home, and that we should have our re-union, in being deeply centered in him. I received it as a fresh marriage for eternity: as such I trust for ever to hold it. All that day, whenever I thought of the expression, *to behold my glory*, it seemed to wipe away every tear, and was as the ring whereby we were joined anew.

[Continued at page 547.]

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## AN ACCOUNT

*Of the most remarkable Occurrences of the Life of*

JOSEPH EVERETT,

*In a Letter to Bishop Asbury.*

(Written by himself.)

I HAVE been often exercised with a desire to exhibit to the world, the dealings of the Spirit of GOD with my soul, but have as often been tempted to think it proceeded from pride, till of late I have felt the impression stronger than ever, by conversing with you on the subject; and am determined to send it into the world, with this view, that it may be of use to some. According to the wisdom given to St. *Paul*, the Lord chooses the foolish things of the world, to confound the things that are wise; and weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty.—If this is the case of the following narration, may that divine Spirit who hath done the work, receive the praise, and I shall be amply rewarded.

I was born in *Queen Ann's* county in the state of *Maryland*, on the 17th day of *June*, 1732. My parents were neither rich nor poor, but laboured and taught me to labour for my living. As to religion, if I may use the term, we had none, but called ourselves of the Church of *England*; the name we had, but alas! that was all; for, with shame may I speak it, we had not even the form: indeed we went to church, so called, and what did we hear when we went, think you? Why, a parcel of dead morality, and that delivered by a blind, avaricious minister, sent by the devil to deceive the people. I have, since the Lord opened my eyes, stood amazed to see sinners not only contented to go thoughtlessly to ruin, but giving blind guides (for such, I fear, some are) most extravagant sums to go before them to hell. O GOD, put a stop to the false prophets making mer-



merchandise of the people's souls! As well as I remember, from the day I was born until I left my father's house, which was more than twenty years, I never saw the worship of GOD performed in his family; but almost *every* kind of iniquity was practised; which shows the truth of GOD's word, that *we are conceived in iniquity, and in sin are we brought forth.* I soon found myself to love sin. My nature was a fit soil for the devil's seed to take root and grow in. I early learned to swear, and to vent my angry passions; to do mischief, and to tell lies to hide it, that I might not get correction for my faults. I can remember my being often very uneasy without knowing what was the cause. I was afraid of death, and often distressed in my sleep, and frequently enquiring about GOD and eternal things; and sometimes felt such a weight of guilt as would cause me to make resolutions to do better for the future. But my resolutions were like ropes of sand. Thus I went on till I arrived to manhood; and from the day I was born until I was twenty years old, I never heard one gospel-sermon. My father sent me to school two years when I was young, where I learned to read; which, by the goodness of GOD, thro' the care of an indulgent mother, I never lost. She *would* make me read my book, which then I counted a hardship.

In this state of wickedness I lived till I got married. The companion I chose was as willing to go to ruin as I was. I believe it would have puzzled a philosopher to determine who loved sin most.

Thus I went on in the road to death for several years, from bad to worse; until a people came into the parts where I lived, called *New-lights* or *Whitefieldites*. They, by their preaching, caused a great noise in our neighbourhood; some said one thing about them, and some another. However, I went to hear them. I must confess that the Lord, all my life while I lived in sin and wickedness, would at one time or other make my life bitter by reason of my sin; particularly when I saw danger near. It appears to me that I had less pleasure in sin than any other person, and in those times, did believe that I should go to hell, if I did  
not

not quit them. But alas ! my sins I hated to part with, and I adore that mercy that stopt the hand of justice, or I might now be lifting up my eyes in hell, calling for water to cool my tongue in vain. In going to hear these *New-lights* preach, I was made to see myself in the way to hell plainer than ever ; and-as I constantly attended the preaching of the word, my sins would appear more clear to me. I thought, before I heard them, that the whole of christianity consisted in breaking off from all our wicked practices ; and the performance of such as common honesty or justice between man and man : but in hearing them, I was convinced that religion was something else ; that I must be born again, or never see the kingdom of GOD. And they proved it by the authority of the bible, which left a conviction of its truth on my heart, that I never lost : they proved that religion was the work of an Almighty Power ; that it was a new creation in the soul ; they showed the necessity of a divine power to awaken the sinner to feel his wretchedness and spiritual death, and showed him his helpless condition ; and that repentance is wrought in the soul by the Divine Spirit ; with the nature and necessity of a gospel-faith, as the instrumental cause of our salvation ; that by it a sinner is justified ; that without it we cannot please GOD ; that whosoever had it, knew their sins forgiven ; and that whosoever died without it, must eternally perish.

This kind of preaching broke up all my former views of religion, and left such a keen conviction on my soul, as gave me new sensations which rendered me miserable from day to day. I began to fall out with my sins, and to break off from them, and to struggle with my stubborn heart, which I found too strong for me ; which made me cry out with one of old, *wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?* Now I began to read the scriptures and other books of piety, and to pray in secret places ; likewise to pray to GOD in my family, and to watch over all my ways ; to observe the sabbath-day, and to do justly to my neighbours, and constantly to attend the preaching of the gospel : for heaven and hell were all I  
thought



thought on; and the more I meditated on them, the more I could see their propriety; and the more I prayed, the more I saw cause to pray. Thus I went on in a legal way, expecting that GOD would save me for doing these duties. But alas! how was I disappointed! for in the performance of these things, the Lord answered my prayers by imparting more and more light to my soul, which made me see and feel my wretchedness to such a degree, that I saw I was one of the most miserable creatures out of hell. Now I began to envy the brute beasts, because they had no souls; or with *Job*, to curse the day wherein I was born: yet I would pray for more distress, and grieve because I could not mourn. Sometimes I would feel less distress than at other times; then the enemy of my soul would tell me all was gone; at other times he would insinuate that my distress was only imaginary, and that there was no reality in it. Sometimes he would insist that my day of grace was entirely gone; at other times he would represent to me, that I was one for whom Christ never died, and that I was reprobated from eternity to suffer the vengeance of everlasting fire. So that at times my life was a burden to me, and I could say that I was carnal, sold under sin; I could feel that the carnal mind is enmity against GOD, and that it is not subject to the law of GOD, neither indeed can be; that they that are under the influence of the flesh, are enemies to GOD. I felt that, by the instrumentality of GOD's law, which is just and good, my soul was roused from its carnal security, and that it immediately resisted or fought against no less a being than the eternal JEHOVAH himself. Oh! the damnable nature of sin! I now saw clearly that I must be born again, or sink to perdition. I felt that GOD would be just, if he sent me to hell; and that if he did, he would be glorified in my damnation.

Thus I went on for near two years, a stranger to peace, with my head bowed down like a bulrush; but my burden was not at all times alike heavy. Those ministers that I went to hear, preached that the gospel was absolute, and that there was no condition in the salvation of sinners; that

Jesus

Jesus Christ died for a certain number, and that they all should be saved and not one lost; and that all the rest of mankind should be damned and go to hell; and that when one of the elect was converted, he must persevere and go to heaven: which doctrine I really believed, and drank into the spirit of it, as far as my capacity would admit of. So that I compare the penitent soul to melted mettle, that will take the impression of whatever mould it is cast into. So did my soul take the Calvinistic or Antinomian mould; the effects of which, if it had not been prevented by divine grace, would have been my inevitable ruin for ever. I often compare that system of principles to a trap. And a trap it is, I believe, by which the devil, the grand fowler, catches millions of millions of unwary souls. If this is the work of GOD upon you, says the tempter, he that hath begun it will carry it on to eternal life. The Lord knows what I suffered by it. However, the Searcher of Hearts knew my desires, that I wanted to save my soul and to do his will. He enabled me to go forward, and bore with my weakness and ignorance. He saw me afar off, as he did the prodigal, striving to return to my heavenly Father's house. He saw me opposing strong temptations by his grace, and took the will for the deed. Persecutions I was no stranger to, both abroad and at home; for I found my dear Master's word fulfilled, that *a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*

By this time my external deportment was new. I would reprove sinners publicly, and saw that they hated him that reproveth in the gate. I saw the word of GOD fulfilled in various cases; but as to the knowledge of sin forgiven, I was still a stranger to it. I still worshipped an unknown GOD; I was a stranger to inward piety. In short, I had no religion. I had taken great pains to get knowledge, and could talk of the doctrines of grace, and of the gospel. I was much thought of, and was said to be a great christian, and they let me know it. Supposing them to be proper judges, I thought I was in a very hopeful way. I now see, knowledge without humility serveth only to puff up the soul with pride.

By



By this time I was joined in communion and fellowship with the Presbyterian or New-light church. However my conscience was tender, and would not permit me to sin without conviction, no more than fire could be on my flesh and not burn me. I praise that GOD, who has promised that he will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, until he brings forth judgment to victory. He still followed me by his grace.

One Sabbath-day as I was setting in my house, none of the family being at home, meditating on the things of GOD, I took up the bible, and it providentially opened at the eleventh chapter of St. *Luke's* gospel; and casting my eyes on the fifth verse, read to the fourteenth. And that moment I saw there was something to be experienced in religion that I was a stranger to. I laid down the bible, and went directly up into a private chamber to seek the blessing. And everlasting praises be to him who has said, *seek and ye shall find*. I was on my knees but a very few moments before he shed abroad his love in such a manner in my heart, that I knew Jesus Christ was the Saviour of the world and the everlasting Son of the Father, and my Saviour; and that I had redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of my sins. I felt these words by the power of his Spirit run through my soul, so that the tongue of a *Gabriel* could not have expressed what I felt: *I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee*. I felt such raptures, and saw with the eyes of my soul such beauties in the Lord Jesus Christ, as opened such a heaven of love in my breast, that I could with the poet sing the following lines:

I rode on the sky,  
 Freely justify'd I!  
 Nor envied *Elijah* his seat:  
 My soul mounted higher  
 In a chariot of fire,  
 And the moon it was under my feet.

So that being justified by faith, I had peace with GOD, through our Lord Jesus Christ. I rejoiced in the hope of the glory of GOD.

[Continued at page 555.]

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### WALKING in SLEEP.

**R**EADING in the Arminian Magazine, an account of a gentleman who used to walk in his sleep, it brought to my remembrance the following facts; which I thought might be of service to such as are troubled with that disorder, by which some have run the risk of their lives.

The eldest son of one of my uncles, who used to walk in his sleep, was cured by a tub full of water being set in the nursery when he went to bed. My uncle was told that it was likely he might walk into it; and that if it waked him, he would never do it again. The tub of water was accordingly set in the room, and he getting up as usual, walked into it, and by so doing waked himself; but never attempted to rise in his sleep after.

When I was a child I walked in my sleep, and my mother was advised to awake me suddenly, and endeavour to frighten me. But others told her this was dangerous; for some children had been thrown into fits by that means, and some irrecoverably lost their senses. She therefore tried the tub of water, which so effectually succeeded, that from the first night it was set, I never walked again in my sleep.

How long the water was continued in my room I do not know; being only about seven years old. From the account the servants gave, my mother did not believe I was asleep. She therefore ordered them to call her some night as soon as I began to move; but, when she came, she said the sight was so affecting, she never desired to see it more: for my eyes were open; but looked like those of a corpse!

and



and my face was so deadly pale, and covered with a cold sweat, with something so inexpressibly distressing in my countenance, that I appeared like one rising from the tomb. She said, she spoke to me, and I answered as rationally as if I had been awake: and that I distinguished when she asked a question; but in the morning, she said, I knew nothing of what had happened.

Whether it would answer upon persons who have had a long habit of walking in their sleep, I know not; but I am sure (however it be accounted for) it cured us two.

D. D.

*Leeds, Oct. 31, 1785.*

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*An Account of the Behaviour of three Malefactors, who were executed at Reading, in Berkshire, on the 25th of March 1786.*

**A**BOUT nine o'clock in the morning, Mr. C. Mr. J. and Mr. L. visited *John Steptoe*, *Richard Hemmings*, and *William Crips*, who were to be executed that day.

Mr. L. had visited *Steptoe* twice before; who as soon as he saw him, came up and shook him by the hand, with a very cheerful countenance. He had very lately known the pardoning love of GOD, and was quite resigned, and happy in the Lord. He had been in the prison some months before his condemnation; during which period he read the bible three times over, and could repeat *St. Paul's* epistle to the *Hebrews*.

For some time before the assizes, he frequently got the prisoners together on an evening, and prayed with them extempore.

*Hemmings* said, he had reason to be thankful that he was brought to that place; for till that time, he had been living without GOD in the world. He said, it was a great mercy the Lord had not cut him off in his sins; and was truly thankful he was now convinced of his want of a Saviour.

*Crips*

*Crips* appeared to be ignorant of the way of salvation by Christ. Mr. C. asked him whether he was not afraid to die? He said, no; but could give no sufficient reason for it. Mr. C. and Mr. J. then spoke to him in a close manner; and though he did not seem hardened, yet he was not truly concerned about his soul. Mr. C. gave a short exhortation, sung a hymn, and (at the request of *Steptoe*) the fifty-first psalm, and then went to prayer twice.

After dinner, Mr. C. Mr. J. and Mr. L. revisited the prisoners. *Crips* seemed then to be much affected, and said, he was convinced of his lost state. A hymn being sung, the gaoler, his wife and daughter, and several other persons joined. Singing being over, *Steptoe* was desired to go to prayer, which he did with great earnestness: while most who were present were deeply affected; and some, who before had but little concern about religion, wept much.

When prayer was ended, Mr. C. spoke to *Hemmings*, and found him happy in the Lord. He said (among other things) "I shall soon be in the arms of Jesus for ever!" Afterwards they all went into the chapel, and received the sacrament. When they returned, *Steptoe* said, "I have been feeding on Christ by faith, who is the Living Bread." *Steptoe* then desired Mr. L. to give out the sinner's lamentation, which they all continued singing, with great fervor, till the under-sheriff sent for them.

The executioner coming into the cell, *Steptoe* immediately went up to him, and with a cheerful countenance shook him by the hand, as though he was his friend. While the coffins were carrying out, *Steptoe* was standing a little way from the cell-door, and the sun shining, he looked up, and said, "The sun of nature shines very bright!" and added, "This is the last sun I shall see shining below; but I shall soon see the Sun of Righteousness, and be with him for ever!"

As soon as the prisoners got into the cart, they began to sing, and continued to do so, at times, till they came to the fatal tree.

After the clergyman had done talking and praying with them, *Steptoe* stood up, and in a firm, collected, and most



affecting manner, gave an exhortation to the people for near five and twenty minutes. Among other things, he said, "It was sin which brought me to this (pointing to the tree) and I am going to suffer justly; but although I am condemned by the law of man, yet as I am interested in the Lord Jesus Christ, I shall not be condemned at the bar of GOD. O think not, my dear fellow-sinners, because we are brought to this shameful end, that we are sinners above all men. I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Do not think that because some of you may now be living in pleasure, pomp, or splendor, that it will avail you any thing when you come to die; for you will be condemned at the bar of GOD, unless you forsake your sins, and flee to the Lord Jesus Christ. And as I have found an interest in him, I do assure you my fellow-sinners, my present situation (though you may think otherwise) is preferable to yours, who are yet in your sins. Therefore flee from the wrath to come, and seek religion with all your might; for there is nothing but true religion which can make you happy either in life or death." He likewise spoke of his belief of the resurrection, in very strong terms, and added,

"Oh my drooping friends below,  
Did you half this glory know;  
Daily would you stretch the wing,  
'Thus to fly and thus to sing."

He then prayed very fervently, for seven or eight minutes, and was much at liberty.

After he had done, *Hemmings* spoke to the people, and warned them to forsake drinking, loose women, and other bad company; and to attend the house of GOD, where they might hear those things which would do them good.

When the clergyman left the cart, they all called out for Mr. C. who immediately came to them. *Hemmings* said, I never was so happy in all my life; for the Lord comforts me.—*Steptoe* said, My mind is quite comfortable and composed, and I am still happy.—*Crips* also declared, he

he was happy. Mr. C. then gave out two verses of that hymn, "Jesu lover of my soul," and was just going to prayer, when the under-sheriff sent an order for him to quit the cart immediately: on which some of the spectators spoke aloud, and said the conduct of the under-sheriff was shameful; and a Mr. *Davis*, a minister of *Reading*, said to the prisoners, "Remember, the sheriff cannot separate your souls from Christ."

Mr. C. then took leave of the prisoners, by exhorting them to look to Jesus; and they all continued fervent in prayer to the last.

*Crips's* last words were, "O GOD, have mercy on me! Jesus thou son of *David*, have pity on me! Jesus, thou friend of sinners, have mercy on me!"

*Steptoe's* last words were, "Into thy hands I commend my soul, O GOD, for thou hast redeemed it."

*Hemmings* also was launched into eternity, calling upon the Lord.—*Steptoe* had a cheerful and heavenly countenance, even to the moment the cap was drawn over his face,—*Hemmings* and *Crips* were also firm and collected to the last.

## L E T T E R.

*To my most endeared Friends, the Servants of Christ in Taunton, Grace and Peace.*

*Most dearly beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown:*

**M**Y heart's desire and prayer to GOD for you is, that you may be saved. I know that you are the butt of men's rage and malice: but you may satisfy yourselves, as *David* in sustaining *Shimei's* curses: it may be, the Lord will look upon our affliction, and requite good for their cursing this day. But, however that be, hold on your way. Your name indeed is cast out as evil, and you  
are



are hated of all men for Christ's sake, for cleaving to his ways and servants: but let not this discourage you, for you are now more than ever blessed: only hold fast, that no man take your crown. Let not any that have begun in the spirit, end in the flesh. Do not forsake GOD till he forsake you: he that endureth to the end shall be saved: the promise is to him that overcometh; therefore think not of looking back: now you have set your hands to Christ's plough, though you labour and suffer, the crop will pay for all: now the Lord is trying who they be that will trust him. The world are all for present pay; they must have something in hand, and will not follow the Lord when there are hazard and hardship in his service. But now is the time for you to prove yourselves believers, when there is nothing visible but hazard, and expence, and difficulty in your Maker's service. Now, my brethren, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong: if you can trust in his promises now, when nothing appears but bonds, and losses, and tribulation, this will be like believers. Brethren, I beseech you to reckon upon no other but crosses here. Let none of you flatter yourselves with dreams of sleeping in your ease, and temporal prosperity, and carrying heaven too. Count not upon rest till you come to the land of promise. Not that I would have any of you run upon hazards uncalled: no, we shall meet them soon enough in the way of our duty, unless we turn aside: but I would have you cast overboard your worldly hopes, and be content to wait till you come on the other side of the grave. Is it not enough to have a whole eternity of happiness? If GOD throws in the comforts of this life too, I would not have you throw them back again, or despise the goodness of the Lord: but I would that you should use this world, as not abusing it, that you should be crucified to the world, and the world to you; that you should declare plainly that you seek a better country, which is an heavenly. Ah! my dear brethren, I beseech you to carry it like pilgrims and strangers, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against your souls; for what have we to do with the customs and fashions of this world, who are strangers in it? Be contented

tented with a traveller's lot : know you not that you are in a strange land ? All is well as long as it is well at home ; I pray you, brethren, daily consider your condition : do you not remember that you are in an inn ? And what though you be but meanly accommodated ! though you fare hard, and lie hard ! Is this a strange thing ? What should travellers look for else ? Indeed if you were of the world, the world would love its own. But now **GOD** hath called you out of the world ; therefore the world hateth you : but remember, it is your duty to love them, even while they hate you ; and to pray for mercy for them that will show no mercy or justice. This I desire you to observe as a great duty of the present times : and let not any so forget their duty, as to wish evil to them that do evil to us ; or to please themselves with the thoughts of being even with them. Let us commit ourselves to him that judgeth righteously, and show ourselves the children of the Most High, who doth good to his enemies, and is kind to the unkind and unthankful : and what if they do hate us ? Their love and good-will were much more to be feared, than their hatred. Brethren, keep yourselves in the love of **GOD** ; here is wisdom. O happy souls, that are his favourites ! for the Lord's sake look to this, make sure of something : look to your sincerity above all things : let not any of you conclude, that because you are of the suffering party, therefore all is well : look to the foundation, that your hearts be taken off from every sin, and set upon **GOD** as your blessedness : beware that none of you have only a name to live, and be no more than almost christians. For the love of your souls, make a diligent search, and try upon what ground you stand ; for it pities me to think any of you should hazard so much, and yet lose all at last : but when once you bear the mark of **GOD**'s favour, you need not fear the world's frowns : cheer up therefore, brethren, be strong in the Lord, and of good courage under the world's usage : fear not : in our Father's house there is bread enough, and room enough : this is sufficient to comfort us under all the inconveniencies of the way, that we have so happy a home, so ready a Father, so

goodly



goodly an heritage. Oh! comfort one another with these words: let GOD see that you can trust in his word: let the world see that you can live upon GOD. I shall share my prayers and love among you all, and commit you to the Almighty GOD: the Keeper of *Israel* that never slumbereth nor sleepeth, be your watchman and keeper to the end. Farewell. I am,

*A fervent well-wisher of your temporal and eternal affairs,*

J. A.

## Poetry.

### *The WEATHERCOCK: an Epigram.*

**H**AIL, versatile emblem of the human mind,  
 True to thyself, and model of mankind:  
 Thy only virtue is in them a vice;  
 This moment thus, the next quite otherwise.  
 Thine an effect of nature's potent laws,  
 As theirs self-int'rest or self-love the cause.  
 Thy various motions point which way inclin'd  
 The fix'd or vary'd current of the wind:  
 'Theirs only prove how fickle are their own,  
 How weakly grounded, and how little known.  
 First this, then that; then this, then that again;  
 Now all a-go, and now a middler strain.  
 Such is mankind, creation's restless heir,  
 Than wind less certain, and more light than air!

## THE UNIVERSAL LOVE OF CHRIST.

**L**ET earth and heav'n agree,  
 Angels and men be join'd,  
 To celebrate with me  
 The Saviour of mankind,  
 T' adore the all-atoning Lamb,  
 And blefs the found of Jefu's Name.

Jefus, transporting found !  
 The joy of earth and heav'n !  
 No other help is found,  
 No other Name is giv'n  
 By which we can falvation have ;  
 But Jefus came the world to fave.

Jefus, harmonious Name !  
 It charms the hofts above !  
 They evermore proclaim,  
 And wonder at his love !  
 'Tis all their happinefs to gaze,  
 'Tis heav'n to fee our Jefu's face.

His Name the finner hears,  
 And is from fin fet free ;  
 'Tis mufic in his ears,  
 'Tis life, and victory ;  
 New fongs do now his lips employ,  
 And dances his glad heart for joy.

Stung by the fcorpion fin,  
 My poor expiring foul  
 The balmly found drinks in,  
 And is at once made whole :  
 See there my Lord upon the tree !  
 I hear, I feel he dy'd for me !



For me and all mankind  
The Lamb of GOD was slain;  
My Lamb his life resign'd  
For ev'ry soul of man;  
Loving to all, he none past by,  
He would not have one sinner die.

O, unexampled love!  
O, all-redeeming grace!  
How freely didst thou move  
To save a fallen race!  
What shall I do to make it known,  
What thou for all mankind hast done?

For this alone I breathe,  
To spread the gospel-sound;  
Glad tidings of thy death  
To all the nations round;  
Who all may feel thy blood apply'd,  
Since all are freely justify'd.

O for a trumpet-voice  
On all the world to call,  
To bid their hearts rejoice  
In him who dy'd for all!  
For all my Lord was crucify'd,  
For all, for all my Saviour dy'd.

To serve thy blessed will,  
Thy dying love to praise,  
Thy counsel to fulfil,  
And minister thy grace,  
Freely what I receive to give,  
The life of heaven on earth I live.

THE

## Arminian Magazine,

For NOVEMBER 1790.



## PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED.

[BY JOHN WESLEY, M. A.]

[Continued from page 476.]

ARGUMENTS from experience alone will never determine this point. They can only prove thus much, on the one hand; that our Lord is exceeding patient, that he is peculiarly unwilling that any believers should perish; that he bears long, very long with all their follies, waiting to be gracious, and to heal their backslidings; and that, on the other hand, he does actually bring back many lost sheep, who, to man's apprehension, were irrecoverable: but all this does not amount to a convincing proof, that no believer can or does fall from grace. So that this argument, from experience, will weigh little with those who believe the possibility of falling.

And it ought to weigh full as little with those who do not. For if you produce ever so many examples of those who were once strong in faith, and are now more abandoned than ever, they will evade them by saying, "O, but they will be brought back; they will not die in their sins." And if they do die in their sins, we come no nearer; we have not gained one point still. For it is easy to say, "They were only hypocrites; they never had true faith." Therefore, scripture alone can determine this question. And



scripture does so fully determine it, that there needs only to set down a very few texts, with some short reflections upon them.

LXIX. That one who is a true believer, or, in other words, one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of GOD himself, may nevertheless finally fall from grace, appears 1. From the word of GOD by Ezek. chap. xviii. ver. 24. *When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, in his trespasses that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.*

Do you object, "This chapter relates wholly and solely to the Jewish church and nation?" I answer, prove this: till then I shall believe that many parts of it concern all mankind.

If you say, 2. "The righteousness spoken of in this chapter, was merely an outward righteousness, without any principle of grace or holiness:" I ask, how is this consistent with the 31st verse, *Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart, and a new spirit?* Is this a "merely outward righteousness, without any inward principle of grace or holiness?"

Will you add, "But admitting the person here spoken of, to be a truly righteous man, what is here said is only a supposition." That I flatly deny. Read over the chapter again, and you will see the facts there laid down, to be not barely *supposed*, but expressly *asserted*.

That the death here mentioned is eternal death, appears from the 26th verse.

*When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them* (here is temporal death;) *for his iniquity that he hath done, he shall die.* Here is death eternal.

If you assert, "both these expressions signify the same thing, and not two different deaths:" you put a palpable force upon the text, in order to make the Holy Ghost speak nonsense.

"Dying

“Dying in *his iniquity*, you say, is the same thing as “dying *for his iniquity*.” Then the text means thus, “When he dieth in them, he shall die in them.” A very deep discovery!

But you say, “It cannot be understood of eternal death; *because* they might be delivered from it by repentance and “reformation.” And why might they not by such repentance as is mentioned in the 31st verse, be delivered from eternal death?

But “the whole chapter, you think, has nothing to do “with the spiritual and eternal affairs of men.”

I believe every impartial man will think quite the contrary, if he reads calmly either the beginning of it: *All souls are mine, saith the Lord GOD; the soul that sinneth, it shall die* (where I can by no means allow that by the death of the soul is meant only a temporal affliction:) or the conclusion, *Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart, and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

It remains then, one who is righteous in the judgment of GOD himself, may finally fall from grace.

LXX. Secondly, That one who is endued with the faith, which produces a good conscience, may nevertheless finally fall, appears from the words of St. Paul to Timothy, 1 Tim. i. 18, 19. *Was a good warfare, holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith, have made shipwreck.*

Observe 1. These men had once the faith that produces a good conscience, which they once had, or they could not have put it away.

Observe 2. They made shipwreck of the faith, which necessarily implies the total and final loss of it.

You object, “Nay, the putting away a good conscience “does not suppose they had it, but rather that they had it “not.”



This is really surprising. But how do you prove it? "Why, " by Acts xiii. 46. where St. Paul says to the Jews, *It was " necessary that the word of GOD should first have been spo-* " *ken to you. But seeing ye put it from you—lo, we turn* " *to the Gentiles."* Here you see the Jews, who never had the gospel, are said to *put it away*.

How! are you sure they " never had what they are here " *said to put away?*" Not so. What they put away, it is undeniable they had till they *put it away*: namely, *the word of GOD, spoken by Paul and Barnabas*. This instance therefore makes full against you. It proves just the reverse of what you cited it for.

But you object further, " men may have a *good conscience*, in some sense, without true faith."

I grant it, in a restrained, limited sense; but not a *good conscience*, simply and absolutely speaking. But such is that of which the apostle here speaks, and which he exhorts *Timo-* *thy to hold fast*: Unless you apprehend, that the *holding it fast*, likewise, " rather supposes he never had it."

" But the faith here mentioned means only the doctrine " of faith:" I want better proof of this.

It remains then, one who has the faith which produces a good conscience, may yet finally fall.

LXXI. Thirdly, those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible church, may nevertheless finally fall.

For thus saith the apostle, *Some of the branches are broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive-tree. Be not high-minded, but fear: if GOD spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of GOD! on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt be cut off, Rom. xi. 17, &c.*

We may observe here, 1. The persons spoken to, were actually engrafted into the olive-tree.

2. This olive-tree is not barely the outward, visible church, but the invisible, consisting of holy believers. So  
the

the text, ver. 16. *If the first fruit be holy, the lump is holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.* And, ver. 20. *Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith.*

3. These holy believers were still liable to be cut off from the invisible church, into which they were then grafted.

4. Here is not the least intimation of their being ever grafted in again.

To this you object, 1. "This olive-tree is not the invisible church, but only the outward gospel-church-state." You affirm this; and I prove the contrary: namely, that it is in the invisible church: for it "consists of holy believers, which none but the invisible church does."

You object, 2. "The Jews who were broken off, were never true believers in Christ."

I am not speaking of the Jews, but of those Gentiles who are mentioned in the 22d verse; whom St. Paul exhorts to *continue in his goodness*: otherwise, saith he, *thou shalt be cut off*. Now I presume, these were true believers in Christ. Yet they were still liable to be cut off.

You assert, 3. "This is only a cutting off from the outward church-state." But how is this proved? So forced and unnatural a construction requires some argument to support it.

You say, 4. "There is a strong intimation, that they shall be grafted in again." No: not that those Gentiles, who *did not continue in his goodness*, should be grafted in, after they were once cut off! I cannot find the least intimation of this. "But *all Israel shall be saved*." I believe they will: but this does not imply the re-engrafting of those Gentiles.

It remains then, that those who are grafted into the spiritual, invisible church, may nevertheless finally fall.

LXXII. Fourthly, those who are branches of Christ, the true vine, may yet finally fall from grace.

For thus saith our blessed Lord himself, *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. I am the vine,*  
ye



*ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned,* John xv. 1, &c.

Here we may observe, 1. The persons spoken of, were *in Christ, branches of the true vine:*

2. Some of these *branches abide not in Christ, but the Father taketh them away:*

3. The *branches which abide not, are cast forth, cast out from Christ and his church:*

4. They are not only *cast forth, but withered; consequently, never grafted in again:*

5. They are not only *cast forth, and withered, but also cast into the fire:* And

6. *They are burned.* It is not possible for words more strongly to declare, that those who are branches of the true vine may finally fall.

“But this,” you say, “furnishes an argument for, not against, the persevering of the saints.”

Yes, just such an argument for final perseverance, as the above-cited words of St. Paul to Timothy.

But how do you make it out? Why thus, “There are two sorts of branches in Christ the vine: the one fruitful, the other unfruitful. The one are eternally chosen, and these abide in him, and can never withdraw away.” Nay, this is the very point to be proved. So that you now, immediately and directly, beg the question.

“The other sort of branches are such as are *in Christ* only by profession; who get into churches, and so are *reckoned in Christ*, and these in time wither away. These never had any life, grace, or fruitfulness from him.”

Surely you do not offer this by way of argument! You are again taking for granted the very point to be proved.

But you will prove, that “those are *branches in Christ*, who never had any life or grace from him, because the churches of Judea and Thessalonica are said to be *in Christ*, though every individual member was not savingly in him.” I deny the consequence, which can never be made good, unless you can prove, that those very Jews or Thessalonians

who never had any life or grace from him, are nevertheless said by our Lord, to be *branches in him*.

It remains, that true believers, who are branches of the true vine, may nevertheless finally fall.

LXXIII. Fifthly, Those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the apostle Peter, *if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (the only possible way of escaping them) they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning,* 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.

But you say, 1. "Their knowledge was not an experimental knowledge." And how do you prove this? "Because had it been such, they could not have lost it." You are begging the question again.

You say, 2. "*Escaping the pollutions of the world*, signifies no more than an outward reformation." How prove you that? You aim at no proof at all. But he that will grant it, may.

You say, 3. "These persons never had any change wrought upon them. They were no other than dogs and swine, not only before and after, but even when they outwardly abstained from gross enormities."

I grant, that before and after that time, during which they *escaped the pollutions of the world* (or, as St. Peter words it in his former epistle, *the corruption that is in the world*) they might well be termed either *dogs* or *swine*, for their gross enormities. But that they deserved such an appellation during that time, I cannot grant without some proof.

It remains, that those who by the inward knowledge of Christ, have escaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

LXXIV. Sixthly, Those who see the light of the glory of GOD in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been

made



made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless so fall from GOD, as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the writer to the Hebrews, *It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost—If they fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of GOD afresh, and put him to an open shame, Heb. vi. 4, &c.*

Must not every unprejudiced person see, the expressions here used are so strong and clear, that they cannot without gross and palpable wresting, be understood of any but true believers?

“But the apostle makes only a supposition, *If they shall fall away.*”

The apostle makes no supposition at all. There is no *if* in the original. The words are Ἀδυνατον τας ἀπαξ φωτισθέντας--καὶ παραπίπτοντας. That is, in plain English, *It is impossible to renew again unto repentance, those who were once enlightened, and have fallen away.*

“No. The words in the original lie literally thus. *It is impossible for those who were once enlightened—and they falling away, to renew them again unto repentance: that is, should they fall away, which is in plain English, if they fall away.*”

Excuse me for speaking plain English here. *Shall a man lie for GOD?* Either you or I do; for I flatly aver (and let all that understand Greek judge between us) that the words in the original do not lie literally thus, *and they falling away* if so they must be καὶ παραπίπτοντας, in the present tense; not καὶ παραπισόντας, in the indefinite) but that they ought to be translated, *And have fallen away; which is as literal a translation as the English tongue will bear.*

Therefore here is no *if* in the case, no supposition at all, but a plain declaration of matter of fact.

LXXV. “But why do you imagine these persons were *truly* believers?” Because all the expressions in their case, natural sense, imply it.

They

*They were once enlightened*: an expression familiar with the apostle, and never by him applied to any but believers. So the GOD of our Lord Jesus Christ give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation—The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling—And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward that believe, Eph. i. 17, &c. So again, GOD, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of GOD in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6.

“Nay, *they were enlightened*, means only, they were baptized; or knew the doctrines of the gospel.”

I cannot believe this, till you bring me a few passages from St. Paul's writings, wherein that expression is evidently taken in either of these senses.

[Continued at page 573.]

## S E R M O N XXIII.

On PHILIPPIANS ii. 12, 13.

*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is GOD which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

1. **S**OME great truths, as the being and attributes of GOD, and the difference between moral good and evil, were known in some measure to the Heathen world; the traces of them are to be found in all nations: so that in some sense it may be said to every child of man, *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; even to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy GOD.* With this truth he has in some measure enlightened every one that cometh into the world. And hereby they that have not the law, that have no written law, are a law unto themselves. They shew the work of the law, the substance of it, though not the letter,



*written in their hearts* by the same hand which wrote the commandments on the tables of stone : *their conscience also bearing them witness*, whether they act suitably thereto or not.

2. But there are two grand heads of doctrine, which contain many truths of the most important nature, of which the most enlightened Heathens in the ancient world were totally ignorant ; as are also the most intelligent Heathens, that are now on the face of the earth : I mean those which relate to the eternal Son of GOD, and the Spirit of GOD ; to the Son, giving himself to be *a propitiation for the sins of the world* ; And to the Spirit of GOD, renewing men in that image of GOD wherein they were created. For after all the pains which ingenious and learned men have taken, that great man, the chevalier *Ramsay* in particular, to find some resemblance of these truths in the immense rubbish of Heathen authors, the resemblance is so exceeding faint, as not to be discerned but by a very lively imagination. Beside that even this resemblance, faint as it was, is only to be found in the discourses of a very few, and those were the most improved and deeply-thinking men in their several generations, while the innumerable multitudes that surrounded them, were little better for the knowledge of the philosophers ; but remained as totally ignorant even of these capital truths, as were the beasts that perish.

3. Certain it is, that these truths were never known to the vulgar, the bulk of mankind, to the generality of men in any nation, till they were brought to light by the gospel. Notwithstanding a spark of knowledge glimmering here and there, the whole earth was covered with darkness, till the Sun of Righteousness arose, and scattered the shades of night. Since this Day-spring from on high has appeared, a great light hath shined unto those, who till then, sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. And thousands of them in every age have known, *that GOD so loved the world, as to give his only-begotten Son, to the end that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish but have everlasting life.* And being entrusted with the oracles of GOD, they have known, that GOD

*hath*

*hath also given us his Holy Spirit, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

4. How remarkable are those words of the apostle, which precede these? *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of GOD, the incommunicable nature of GOD from eternity, counted it no act of robbery, (that is the precise meaning of the word) no invasion of any other's prerogative; but his own unquestionable right, to be equal with GOD. The word implies both the fulness and the supreme height of the Godhead. To which are opposed the two words, he emptied, and he humbled himself. He emptied himself of that divine fulness, veiled his fulness from the eyes of men and angels, taking, and by that very act emptying himself, the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, a real man like other men. And being found in fashion as a man, a common man, without any peculiar beauty or excellency, he humbled himself to a still greater degree, becoming obedient to GOD, though equal with him, even unto death, yea, the death of the cross, the greatest instance both of humiliation and obedience.*

Having proposed the example of Christ, the apostle exhorts them to secure the salvation which Christ hath purchased for them. *Wherefore work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is GOD which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

In these comprehensive words we may observe,

First, That grand truth, which ought never to be out of our remembrance, *It is GOD that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure:*

Secondly, The improvement we ought to make of it, *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling:*

Thirdly, The connexion between them: *It is GOD that worketh in you: therefore work out your own salvation.*

I. 1. First, we are to observe that great and important truth, which ought never to be out of our remembrance, *It is GOD that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* The meaning of these words may be made more plain, by a small transposition of them. *It is GOD that of his*



*his good pleasure worketh in you both to will and to do.* This position of the words, connecting the phrase of *his good pleasure* with the word *worketh*, removes all imagination of merit from man, and gives GOD the whole glory of his own work. Otherwise we might have had some room for boasting, as if it were our own desert, some goodness in us, or some good thing done by us, which first moved GOD to work. But this expression cuts off all such vain conceits, and clearly shews his motive to work lay wholly in himself: in his own mere grace, in his unmerited mercy.

2. It is by this alone he is impelled to work in man both to will and to do. The expression is capable of two interpretations; both of which are unquestionably true. First, *To will*, may include the whole of inward; *to do*, the whole of outward religion. And if it be thus understood, it implies, that it is GOD that worketh both inward and outward holiness. Secondly, *To will*, may imply every good desire; *to do*, whatever results therefrom. And then the sentence means, GOD breathes into us every good desire, and brings every good desire to good effect.

3. The original words τὸ θέλειν and τὸ ἐνεργεῖν seem to favour the latter construction: τὸ θέλειν, which we render *to will*, plainly including every good desire, whether relating to our tempers, words, or actions; to inward or outward holiness. And τὸ ἐνεργεῖν which we render *to do*, manifestly implies all that power from on high; all that energy which works in us every right disposition, and then furnishes us for every good word and work.

4. Nothing can so directly tend to hide pride from man, as a deep, lasting conviction of this. For if we are thoroughly sensible, that we have nothing which we have not received, how can we glory as if we had not received it? If we know and feel, that the very first motion of good is from above, as well as the power which conducs it to the end: if it is GOD that not only infuses every good desire, but that accompanies and follows it, else it vanishes away; then it evidently follows, that *he who glorieth, must glory in the Lord.*

II. 1. Proceed we now to the second point. If GOD *worketh in you*, then *work out your own salvation*. The original word rendered, *work out*, implies the doing a thing thoroughly. *Your own*—for you yourselves must do this, or it will be left undone for ever. *Your own salvation*—Salvation begins with what is usually termed (and very properly) *preventing grace*; including the first wish to please GOD, the first dawn of light concerning his will, and the first slight, transient conviction of having sinned against him. All these imply some tendency toward life, some degree of salvation, the beginning of a deliverance from a blind, unfeeling heart, quite insensible of GOD and the things of GOD. Salvation is carried on by *convincing grace*, usually in scripture termed *repentance*, which brings a larger measure of self-knowledge, and a farther deliverance from the heart of stone. Afterwards we experience the proper christian salvation, whereby *through grace*, we *are saved by faith*: consisting of those two grand branches, justification and sanctification. By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favour of GOD: by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of GOD. All experience as well as scripture shew this salvation to be both instantaneous and gradual. It begins the moment we are justified, in the holy, humble, gentle, patient love of GOD and man. It gradually increases from that moment, as a *grain of mustard-seed*, which at first is the least of all seeds, but gradually puts forth large branches, and becomes a great tree; till in another instant the heart is cleansed from all sin, and filled with pure love to GOD and man. But even that love increases more and more, till we *grow up in all things unto him that is our head*, till we attain the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

2. But how are we to *work out* this salvation? The apostle answers, *with fear and trembling*. There is another passage of St. Paul wherein the same expression occurs, which may give light to this. *Servants, obey your masters according to the flesh*, according to the present state of things; (although sensible that in a little time the servant will be free



free from his master,) *with fear and trembling*. This is a proverbial expression, which cannot be understood literally. For what master could bear, much less require, a servant to stand trembling and quaking before him? And the following words utterly exclude this meaning: *in singleness of your heart*, with a single eye to the will and providence of GOD, *not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of GOD from the heart*: doing whatever they do as the will of GOD, and therefore with their might, Eph. vi. 5, &c. It is easy to see, that these strong expressions of the apostle clearly imply two things: first, that every thing be done with the utmost earnestness of spirit, and with all care and caution; (perhaps more directly referring to the former words *μετὰ φόβου* *with fear*) secondly, that it be done with the utmost diligence, speed, punctuality and exactness: not improbably referring to the latter word *μετὰ τρέφους* *with trembling*.

3. How easily may we transfer this to the business of life, the working out our own salvation? With the same temper and in the same manner that Christian servants serve their masters that are upon earth, let all Christians labour to serve their master that is in heaven: that is, first, with the utmost earnestness of spirit, with all possible care and caution, and secondly, with the utmost diligence, speed, punctuality, and exactness.

4. But what are the steps which the scripture directs us to take, in the working out of our own salvation? The prophet *Isaiah* gives us a general answer, touching the first steps which we are to take, *cease to do evil; learn to do well*. If ever you desire that GOD should work in you that faith, whereof cometh both present and eternal salvation; by the grace already given fly from all sin as from the face of a serpent: carefully avoid every evil word and work; yea, abstain from all appearance of evil. And *learn to do well*: be zealous of good works, of works of piety, as well as works of mercy: family-prayer, and crying to GOD in secret. Fast in secret, and *your Father which seeth in secret, he will reward you openly*. *Search the scriptures*: hear-

hear them in public, read them in private, and meditate therein. At every opportunity be a partaker of the Lord's supper: *do this in remembrance of him*, and he will meet you at his own table. Let your conversation be with the children of GOD, and see that it *be in grace, seasoned with salt*. As ye have time, do good unto all men, to their souls and to their bodies. And herein *be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*. It then only remains, that ye deny yourselves, and take up your crosses daily. Deny yourselves every pleasure which does not prepare you for taking pleasure in GOD. And willingly embrace every means of drawing near to GOD, though it be a cross, though it be grievous to flesh and blood. Thus, when you have redemption in the blood of Christ, you will *go on to perfection*; till *walking in the light as he is in the light*, you are enabled to testify, that *he is faithful and just*, not only to *forgive your sins*, but to *cleanse you from all unrighteousness*.

III. 1. "But," say some, "what connexion is there between the former and the latter clause of this sentence? Is there not rather a flat opposition, between the one and the other? If it is GOD that worketh in us both to will and to do, what need is there of our working? Does not his working thus supercede the necessity of our working at all? Nay, does it not render our working impracticable, as well as unnecessary? For if we allow that GOD does all, what is there left for us to do?"

2. Such is the reasoning of flesh and blood. And at first hearing it is exceeding plausible. But it is not solid, as will evidently appear, if we consider the matter more deeply. We shall then see, there is no opposition between these, "GOD works; therefore do ye work:" but on the contrary, the closest connexion, and that in two respects. For, first, GOD works; therefore you *can* work: secondly, GOD works, therefore you *must* work.

3. First. GOD worketh in you; therefore you *can* work: otherwise it would be impossible. If he did not work, it would be impossible for you to work out your own salvation.



tion. *With man this is impossible*, saith our Lord, *for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven*. Yea, it is impossible for any man; for any that is born of a woman, unless GOD work in him. Seeing all men are by nature not only sick, but *dead in trespasses and sins*, it is not possible for them to do any thing well, till GOD raises them from the dead. It was impossible for *Lazarus to come forth*, till the Lord had given him life. And it is equally impossible for us, to *come out of our sins*, yea, or to make the least motion toward it, till he who hath all power in heaven and earth, calls our dead souls into life.

4. Yet this is no excuse for those who continue in sin, and lay the blame upon their Maker, by saying, it is GOD only that must quicken us; for we cannot quicken our own souls. For allowing that all the souls of men are dead in sin *by nature*, this excuses none, seeing there is no man in a mere state of nature: there is no man, unless he has quenched the Spirit, that is wholly void of the grace of GOD. No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called *natural conscience*. But this is not natural: it is more properly termed *preventing grace*. Every man has a greater or less measure of this, which waiteth not for the call of man. Every one has, sooner or later, good desires, although the generality of men stifle them before they can strike deep root, or produce any considerable fruit. Every one has some measure of that light, some faint and glimmering ray, which sooner or later, more or less, enlightens every man that cometh into the world. And every one, unless he be one of the small number, whose conscience is feared as with a hot iron, feels more or less uneasy, when he acts contrary to the light of his own conscience. So that no man sins, because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he hath.

5. Therefore in as much as GOD works in you, you are now able to work out your own salvation. Since he worketh in you, of his own good pleasure, without any merit of yours, both to will and to do, it is possible for you to fulfil all righteousness. It is possible for you, to

love

love GOD, because he hath first loved us; and to walk in love, after the pattern of our great master. We know indeed that word of his to be absolutely true, *without me ye can do nothing*. But on the other hand we know, every believer can say, *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me*.

6. Mean time let us remember, that GOD has joined these together in the experience of every believer. And therefore we must take care, not to imagine they are ever to be put asunder. We must beware of that mock humility, which teacheth us to say, in excuse for our wilful disobedience, “O, I can do nothing:” and stops there, without once naming the grace of GOD. Pray, think twice. Consider what you say. I hope you wrong yourself. For if it be really true, that you can do nothing, then you have no faith. And if you have not faith, you are in a wretched condition: you are not in a state of salvation. Surely it is not so. You can do something, through Christ strengthening you. Stir up the spark of grace which is now in you: and he will give you more grace.

7. Secondly. GOD worketh in you: therefore you *must* work: you must be *workers together with him*, (they are the very words of the apostle) otherwise he will cease working. The general rule on which his gracious dispensations invariably proceed, is this, *Unto him that hath, shall be given: but from him that hath not, that does not improve the grace already given, shall be taken away what he assuredly hath*. (So the words ought to be rendered.) Even St. Augustine who is generally supposed to favour the contrary doctrine, makes that just remark, *qui fecit nos sine nobis, non salu bit, nos sine nobis*: “he that made us without ourselves, will not save us without ourselves.” He will not save us, unless we *save ourselves from this untoward generation*: unless we ourselves *fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life*: unless we *agonize to enter in at the strait gate, deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and labour, by every possible means, to make our own calling and election sure*.



8. Labour then, brethren, not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life. Say with our blessed Lord, though in a somewhat different sense, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* In consideration that he still worketh in you, be never weary of well-doing. Go on, in virtue of the grace of GOD, preventing, accompanying and following you, in the work of faith, in the patience of hope, and in the labour of love. Be ye stedfast and immoveable; always abounding in the work of the Lord. And the GOD of peace, who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the Sheep [Jesus], make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you what is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever!

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## AN EXTRACT

Of the Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 495.]

SUNDAY, July 1. I preached to about 5000, on that favourite advice of the infidel in *Ecclesiastes* (so zealously enforced by his brethren now) *Be not righteous over much.* At Hannam and at Rose-Green I explained the latter part of the viith of St. Luke: That verse especially, *When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both.*

A young woman sunk down at Rose-Green, in a violent agony both of body and mind: As did five or six persons in the evening at the New Room, at whose cries many were greatly offended. The same offence was given in the morning by one at Weaver's-Hall, and by eight or nine others, at Gloucester-Lane in the evening. The first that was deeply touched was L—W—; whose mother had been not a little displeased a day or two before, when she was told, how her daughter

daughter had *exposed herself* before all the congregation : The mother herself was the next, who fell down, and lost her senses in a moment ; but went home with her daughter, full of joy, as did most of those that had been in pain.

Soon after the society, I went to Mrs. T—'s, whose nearest relations were earnestly dissuading her, from being *Righteous over much* ; and by the old motive, *Why shouldst thou destroy thyself?* She answered all they advanced with meekness and love, and continued stedfast and immoveable. Endure hardship still, thou good soldier of Christ ! Persecuted but not forsaken ; Torn with inward, and encompassed with outward temptations : But yielding to none. O may patience have its perfect work !

*Tuesday 3.* I preached at *Bath* to the most attentive and serious audience I have ever seen there. On *Wednes.* I preached at *Newgate* on those words, *Because of the Pharisees, they durst not confess him.—For they loved the praise of men, more than the praise of GOD.* A message was delivered to me when I had done, from the sheriffs, “ That I must preach there no more.”

*Friday 6.* I pressed a serious Quaker to tell me, why he did not come to hear me as formerly ? He said, “ Because he found we were not *led by the Spirit* ; for we fixt times of preaching before-hand ; whereas we ought to do nothing unless we were *sensibly moved thereto* by the Holy Ghost.” I asked, “ Whether we ought not to do what GOD in scripture commands, when we have opportunity ? Whether the providence of GOD thus concurring with his word, were not a sufficient reason for our doing it, although we were not at that moment *sensibly moved thereto* by the Holy Ghost ?” He answered, “ It was not a sufficient reason. This was to regard *the letter that killeth.*” GOD grant, that I may so regard it all the days of my life !

In the afternoon I was with Mr. *Whitefield*, just come from *London*, with whom I went to *Baptist-Mills*, where he preached *concerning the Holy Ghost, which all who believe are to receive* ; not without a just, though severe censure of those, who preach *as if* there were no Holy Ghost.

*Saturday*



*Saturday 7.* I had an opportunity to talk with him of those outward signs, which had so often accompanied the inward work of GOD. I found his objections were chiefly grounded on gross misrepresentations of matter of fact. But the next day he had an opportunity of informing himself better. For no sooner had he begun (in the application of his sermon) to invite all sinners, to believe in Christ, than four persons sunk down close to him, almost in the same moment. One of them lay without either sense or motion. A second trembled exceedingly. The third had strong convulsions all over his body, but made no noise, unless by groans. The fourth, equally convulsed, called upon GOD, with strong cries and tears. From this time I trust, we shall all suffer GOD to carry on his own work in the way that pleaseth him.

*Thursday 13.* I went to a gentleman who is much troubled with what they call *lowness of spirits*. Many such have I been with before; but in several of them, it was no bodily distemper. They wanted something, they knew not what, and were therefore, heavy, uneasy, and dissatisfied with every thing. The plain truth is, they wanted GOD, they wanted Christ, they wanted faith. And GOD convinced them of their want, in a way their physicians no more understood than themselves. Accordingly nothing availed till the great physician came. For in spite of all natural means, he who made them for himself, would not suffer them to rest, till they rested in him.

On *Friday* in the afternoon I left *Bristol* with Mr. *Whitefield*, in the midst of heavy rain. But the clouds soon dispersed, so that we had a fair, calm evening, and a serious congregation at *Thornbury*.

In the morning we breakfasted with a Quaker, who had been brought up in the church of *England*: but being under strong convictions of inward sin, and applying to several persons for advice, they all judged him to be under a disorder of body, and gave advice accordingly. Some Quakers with whom he met about the same time, told him, it was the hand of GOD upon his soul; and advised him

to seek another sort of relief than those miserable comforters had recommended. *Wo unto you, ye blind leaders of the blind!* How long will ye pervert the right ways of the Lord? Ye who tell the mourners in *Zion*, much religion hath made you mad! Ye who send them whom GOD hath wounded to the devil for cure; to company, idle books or diversions! Thus shall they perish in their iniquity; but their blood shall GOD require at your hands!

We had an attentive congregation at *Gloucester* in the evening. In the morning, Mr. *Whitefield* being gone forward, I preached to about five thousand there, Christ *our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*. It rained violently at five in the evening; notwithstanding which two or three thousand people stayed, to whom I expounded that glorious vision of *Ezekiel*, of the resurrection of the dry bones.

On *Monday* 16. After preaching to two or three thousand on *What must I do to be saved?* I returned to *Bristol*, and preached to about three thousand, on those words of *Job*, *There the wicked cease from troubling; there the weary are at rest.*

*Tuesday* 17. I rode to *Bradford*, 5 miles from *Bath*, whither I had been long invited to come. I waited on the minister, and desired leave to preach in his church. He said, "It was not usual to preach on the week-days: but if I could come thither on a *Sunday*, he should be glad of my assistance." Thence I went to a gentleman in the town, who had been present when I preached at *Bath*, and with the strongest marks of sincerity and affection, *wished me good luck in the name of the Lord*. But it was past. I found him now quite cold. He began disputing on several heads, and at last told me plainly, One of our own college had informed him, "They always took me to be a little crack-brained at *Oxford*."

However some persons who were not of his mind, having pitched on a convenient place (called *Bear-field*, or *Bury-field*) on the top of the hill under which the town lies; I there offered Christ to about a thousand people, for wisdom,



dom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Thence I returned to *Bath*, and preached on *What must I do to be saved?* to a larger audience than ever before. I was wondering the god of this world was so still; when at my return from preaching, poor R——M—— told me, *he could not let me preach any more in his ground*. I asked, him why? He said, “the people hurt his trees, and stole things out of his ground. And besides (added he) *I have already, by letting thee be there, merited the displeasure of my neighbours.*” O fear of man! who is above thee, but they who indeed worship GOD in spirit and in truth? Not even those who have one foot in the grave! Not even those who dwell in rooms of cedar; and who have heaped up gold as the dust, and silver as the sand of the sea!

Saturday 21. I began expounding a second time our Lord's sermon up on the mount. In the morning, Sunday 22, as I was explaining *Blessed are the pure in spirit*, to about three thousand people, we had a fair opportunity of shewing all men, what manner of spirit we were of. For in the middle of the sermon, the press-gang came and seized on one of the hearers: (Ye learned in the law, what becomes of *Magna charta*, and of *English liberty*, and *property*? Are not these mere sounds, while, on any pretence, there is such a thing as a press-gang suffered in the land?) all the rest standing still, and none opening his mouth or lifting up his hand to resist them.

Monday 23. To guard young converts from fancying, that they had already attained, or were already perfect, I preached on those words, *So is the kingdom of GOD, as when a man casteth seed into the ground—and riseth day and night, and the seed buddeth forth and springeth up he knoweth not how—first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.*

On several evenings this week, and particularly on Friday, many were deeply convinced; but none were delivered from that painful conviction: *The children came to the birth; but there was not strength to bring forth.* I fear we have grieved the Spirit of the jealous GOD, by questioning  
his

his work : and that therefore he is withdrawn from us for a season. *But he will return and abundantly pardon.*

*Mond. 30.* Two more were in strong pain, both their souls and bodies being well-nigh torn asunder. But though we cried unto GOD, there was no answer, neither did he as yet deliver them at all.

One of these had been remarkably zealous against those that cried out and made a noise, being sure that *any of them might help it if they would.* And the same opinion she was in still till the moment she was struck through as with a sword, and fell trembling to the ground. She then cried aloud, though not articulately, her words being swallowed up. In this pain she continued twelve or fourteen hours, and then her soul was set at liberty. But her master (for she was a servant till that time, at a gentleman's in town) forbid her returning to him, saying, *he would have none in his house, who had received the Holy Ghost.*

*Tuesday 31.* I preached at *Bradford* to above two thousand, many of whom were of the better rank, on *What must I do to be saved?* They all behaved with decency, and none went away till it was ended. While I was preaching at *Bath*, in my return, some of the audience did not behave so well ; being, I fear, a little too nearly concerned, when I came to the application of those words, *Not only this our craft, is in danger to be set at nought ; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised—whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.*

Having a caution against religious delusion, put into my hands about this time, I thought it my duty to write to the author of it : which I accordingly did, in the following terms :

*Reverend Sir,*

1. **Y**OU charge me (for I am called a *Methodist*, and consequently included within your charge) with *vain and confident boastings, rash, uncharitable censures, damning all who do not feel what I feel ; not allowing men to be in a salvable state, unless they have experienced some sudden*  
operation



operation, which may be distinguished as the hand of GOD upon them, overpowering as it were the soul: With denying men the use of GOD's creatures, which he hath appointed to be received with thanksgiving, and encouraging abstinence, prayer and other religious exercises, to the neglect of the duties of our station. O sir, can you prove this charge upon me? The Lord shall judge in that day!

2. I do indeed go out into the highways and hedges to call poor sinners to Christ. But not in a tumultuous manner, not to the disturbance of the public peace, or the prejudice of families. Neither herein do I break any law which I know; much less set at nought all rule and authority. Nor can I be said to intrude into the labours of those, who do not labour at all; but suffer thousands of those for whom Christ died, to perish for lack of knowledge.

3. They perish for want of knowing, That we as well as the Heathens, are alienated from the life of GOD: that every one of us by the corruption of our inmost nature, is very far gone from original righteousness; so far, that every person born into the world, deserveth GOD's wrath and damnation: That we have by nature no power either to help ourselves, or even to call upon GOD to help us; all our tempers and works, in our natural state, being only evil continually. So that our coming to Christ, as well as theirs, must infer a great and mighty change. It must infer, not only an outward change, from stealing, lying and all corrupt communication; but a thorough change of heart, an inward renewal in the spirit of our mind. Accordingly, the old man implies infinitely more than outward evil conversation, even an evil heart of unbelief, corrupted by pride and a thousand deceitful lusts. Of consequence, the new man must imply infinitely more than outward good conversation, even a good heart, which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness: a heart full of that faith, which working by love, produces all holiness of conversation.

4. The change from the former of these states to the latter, is what I call *The new birth*. But you say, I am not content with this plain and easy notion of it, but fill myself  
and

*and others with fantastical conceits* about it. Alas, sir, how can you prove this? And if you cannot prove it, what amends can you make, either to GOD or to me or to the world, for publicly asserting a gross falshood?

5. Perhaps you say, *You can prove this of Mr. Whitefield.* What then? This is nothing to me. I am not accountable for *his* words. The journal you quote I never saw till it was in print. But indeed you wrong him as much as me: First, where you represent him as judging the notions of the Quakers *in general* (concerning being led by the Spirit) to be right and good; whereas he speaks only of those *particular men*, with whom he was then conversing. And again, where you say, he *supposes* a person *believing in Christ*,—to be without any *saving knowledge* of him. He *supposes* no such thing. To *believe in Christ*, was the very thing he *supposed* wanting: As understanding that term *believing* to imply, not only an assent to the articles of our creed, but also *A sure trust and confidence of the mercy of GOD through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

6. Now this it is certain a man may want, although he can truly say, *I am chaste, I am sober, I am just in my dealings, I help my neighbour, and use the ordinances of GOD. And however such a man may have behaved in these respects, he is not to think well of his own state, till he experiences something within himself, which he has not yet experienced, but which he may be before-hand assured he shall,* If the promises of GOD are true. That *something* is, a living faith: *A sure trust and confidence in GOD, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of GOD.* And from this will spring many other things, which till then he experienced not, as, the love of GOD shed abroad in his heart, the peace of GOD which passeth all understanding, and joy in the Holy Ghost, joy though not *unfelt*, yet *unspeakable* and full of glory.

7. These are some of those *inward fruits of the Spirit*, which must be *felt*, wheresoever they are: And without these, I cannot learn from holy writ, that any man is *born of the Spirit.* I beseech you, sir, by the mercies of GOD,



that if as yet you *know nothing of such inward feelings*, if you do not *feel in yourself these mighty workings of the Spirit of Christ*, at least you would not contradict and blaspheme. When the Holy Ghost hath fervently kindled your love towards GOD, you will know these to be very *sensible* operations. *As you hear the wind and feel it too*, while it *strikes upon your bodily organs*, you will know you are under the guidance of GOD's Spirit the same way, namely, by *feeling it in your soul*: By the present peace and joy and love which you feel within, as well as by its outward and more distant effects.

*I am, &c.*

I have often wished, that all calm impartial men, would consider what is advanced by another writer, in a little discourse concerning enthusiasm or religious delusion, published about this time. His words are,

“ A *minister* of our church, who may look upon it as his duty to warn his *parishioners*, or an *author* who may think it necessary to caution his readers, against *such preachers* or their doctrine (enthusiastic preachers, I suppose, such as he takes it for granted the Methodist preachers are) ought to be very careful to act with a *Christian spirit*, and to advance nothing but with *temper, charity and truth*.—Perhaps the following rules may be proper to be observed by them.

1. Not to *blame* persons for doing that now, which scripture records *holy men* of old to have practised, lest, had they lived in those times, they should have condemned them also :

2. Not to censure persons in *holy orders*, for teaching the same doctrines which are taught in the *scriptures* and by *our church*; lest they should ignorantly *censure* what they profess to *defend*.

3. Not to censure any professed *members* of our church, who live *good lives*, for resorting to *religious assemblies* in private houses, to perform in society acts of *divine worship*; when the same seems to have been practised by the primitive Christians; and when, alas! there are so many parishes, where

where a person *piously* disposed, has no opportunity of joining in the public service of our church, more than *one hour and a half* in a week.

4. Not to *condemn* those who are constant attendants on the *communion* and *service* of our church, if they sometimes use *other prayers* in private assemblies: since the *best divines* of our church have composed and published many *prayers*, that have not the sanction of public authorities; which implies a general consent, that our church has not made provision for every private occasion.

[Continued at page 595.]

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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[Continued from page 504.]

“**A** WAKING some time after, he said, “*Polly*, I have been thinking that it was *Israel’s* fault that they asked for *signs*. We will not do so: but abandoning our whole selves to the will of **GOD**, will lie patiently before him; assured that he will do all things well.”

“My dear love, said I, if ever I have done or said any thing to grieve thee, how will the remembrance wound my heart, if thou shouldst be taken from me? He intreated me with inexpressible tenderness, not to allow the thought, declaring his thankfulness for our union, in a variety of words written on my heart, as with the adamant pen of friendship deeply dipt in blood.

“On Wednesday, after groaning all day long, under the weight of the power of **GOD**, he told me, he had received such a manifestation of the full meaning of those words, *GOD is love*, as he could never be able to express. “It fills my heart, said he, every moment. O *Polly*, my dear *Polly*, *GOD is love!* Shout, shout aloud! I want a  
gust



gust of praise to go to the ends of the earth! But it seems as if I could not speak much longer. Let us fix on a sign between ourselves. Now, said he, (tapping me twice with his finger) I mean, GOD is love. And we will draw each other into GOD. Observe! By this we will draw each other into GOD."

"*Sally* coming in, he cried out, "O *Sally*, GOD is love! Shout both of you! I want to hear you shout his praise!" All this time the medical friend, who attended him, diligently, hoped he was in no danger: as he had no head-ach, but much sleep without the least delirium, and an almost regular pulse. So was the disease, though commisioned to take his life, restrained by the power of GOD.

"On Thursday his speech began to fail. While he was able, he spoke to all that came in his way. Hearing that a stranger was in the house, he ordered her to be called up. But the uttering only two sentences made him ready to faint away. And while he had any power of speech he would not be silent to his friendly Doctor. "O sir, said he, you take much thought for my body: permit me to take thought for your soul!" When I could scarce understand any thing he said, I spoke these words, *GOD is love*. Instantly, as if all his powers were awakened, he broke out in a rapture, "GOD is love! love! love! O for that gust of praise! I want to sound!"—Here his voice again failed. All this time he was in much pain, and suffered many ways: but still with such unutterable patience, as none but those that were present can conceive. If I did but name his sufferings, he would smile and make the sign.

"On Friday, observing his body covered with spots, I felt a sword pierce through my soul. As I was kneeling by his side, with my hand in his, intreating the Lord to be with us in this tremendous hour; he strove to say many things, but could not articulate the words. All he could do was to press my hand, and frequently repeat the sign. At last he breathed out, "Head of the church, be head to my wife!"

When

When I was forced to leave him for a few moments, *Sally* said to him, my dear master, do you know me? He replied, "GOD will put his right-hand under you." She added, O my dear master, should you be taken away, what a disconsolate creature will my poor, dear mistress be! He replied, "GOD will be her all in all!"

He always took a peculiar pleasure in repeating or hearing those words,

Jesu's love through earth and skies,  
Mercy, free, boundless mercy cries.

Whenever I repeated them to him, he would answer, "boundless! boundless! boundless!" He now added, though not without much difficulty,

Mercy's full power I soon shall prove,  
Lov'd with an everlasting love.

"On Saturday in the afternoon, his fever seemed quite off, and a few friends standing near his bed, he reached his hand to each: and looking on a minister, said, "are you ready to assist to-morrow?" His recollection surprised us, as the day of the week had not been mentioned in the room. Many were of opinion he would recover: and one of them said to him, do you think the Lord will raise you up? He strove to answer, and could just pronounce, "Raise me up in the resurr"—Meaning in the resurrection. To another who asked the same question, he said, "I leave it all to GOD."

"In the evening the fever came again, and with greater violence than ever. The mucus then falling on his throat, almost strangled him. It was supposed, the same painful symptom would grow more and more violent to the last. As I felt this exquisitely, I cried to the Lord to remove it. And, glory be to his name, he did! From that time it returned no more.

As night drew on, I perceived him dying very fast. His fingers could hardly make the sign, which he scarce ever forgot: and his speech seemed quite gone. I said, My dear



dear creature, I ask not for myself : *I know thy soul* : but for the sake of others, if Jesus is very present with thee, lift up thy right-hand. Immediately he did. If the prospect of glory sweetly opens before thee, repeat the sign. He instantly raised it again, and in half a minute, a second time. He then threw it up, as if he would reach the top of the bed. After this, his hands moved no more. But on my saying, Art thou in pain ? He answered, " No." From this time he lay in a kind of sleep, though with his eyes open and fixt. For the most part he sat upright, against pillows, with his head a little inclining to one side. And so remarkably composed, yea triumphant was his countenance, that the least trace of death was scarce discernible in it. Twenty-four hours he was in this situation, breathing like a person in common sleep. About thirty-five minutes past ten on Sunday night, *Aug. 14*, his precious soul entered into the joy of his Lord, without one struggle or groan, in the fifty-sixth year of his age.

" And here I break off my mournful story : but on my bleeding heart, the fair picture of his heavenly excellencies will be for ever drawn. When I call to mind his ardent zeal, his laborious endeavours to seek and save the lost, his diligence in the employment of his time, his Christ-like condescension toward me, and his uninterrupted converse with heaven : I may well be allowed to add, my loss is beyond the power of words to paint. I have often gone through deep waters ; but all my afflictions were nothing to this. Well : I want no pleasant prospect but upwards ; nor any thing whereon to fix my hope, but immortality.

" From the time I have had the happiness and honour of being with him, every day more and more convinced me, he was the christian. I saw, I loved in him, the image of my Saviour, and thought myself the happiest of women, in the possession of the most sympathizing and heavenly friend. My sorrow bears a due proportion. But it is alleviated by that thought, *United in GOD we cannot be divided*. No : we are of one household still : we are joined in him as our center ; *of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*.

*named.* It is said of New Testament believers, *they are come to the spirits of just men made perfect*: to the glorious privilege of communion with the church triumphant. But this is far more apparent to the eyes of celestial spirits, than to ours, which are yet veiled with flesh and blood. Yet as there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, and as the prayers of saints still on earth are represented by incense in the hands of the elders, I can only consider departed spirits, and ministering angels, as one innumerable company, continually surrounding us. And are they not as nearly united to their fellow-soldiers now, as when they were in the body? What should hinder? Gratitude and affection are natives of heaven, and live for ever there. Forgetfulness is a property of mortality, and drops off with the body. Therefore they that loved us in the Lord, will surely love us for ever: can any thing material interrupt the light or presence of a spirit? Nay,

Walls within walls no more the passage bar  
Than unopposing space of liquid air.

“ On the 17th, his remains were deposited in *Madeley* church-yard, amidst the tears and lamentations of thousands. The *service* was performed by the Rev. Mr. *Hatton*, rector of *Waters-Upton*, whom GOD enabled to speak in a pathetic manner to the weeping flock. In the conclusion, at my request, he read the following paper:

“ As it was the desire of my beloved husband to be buried in this plain manner, so out of tenderness, he begged, that I might not be present. And in every thing I would obey him.

“ Permit me then, by the mouth of a friend, to bear an open testimony, to the glory of GOD, that I who have known him in the most perfect manner, am constrained to declare, that I never knew any one walk so closely in the ways of GOD as he did. The Lord gave him a conscience tender as the apple of an eye. And he literally preferred the interest of every one to his own.

“ He



“ He was rigidly just, and perfectly loose from attachment to the world. He shared his all with the poor, who lay so close to his heart, that at the approach of death, when he could not speak without difficulty, he cried out “ *O my poor ! What will become of my poor ?*” He was blest with so great a degree of humility, as is scarce to be found. I am witness how often he has rejoiced, in being treated with contempt. Indeed it seemed the very food of his soul, to be little and unknown.

“ His zeal for souls I need not tell you. Let the labours of twenty-five years, and a martyr’s death in the conclusion, imprint it on your hearts. His diligent visiting of the sick occasioned the fever, which by GOD’s commission tore him from you and me. And his vehement desire to take his last leave of you with dying lips and hands, gave (it is supposed) the finishing stroke, by preparing his blood for putrefaction. Thus has he lived and died your servant. And will any of you refuse to meet him at GOD’s right-hand in that day ?

“ He walked with death always in sight. About two months ago, he came to me and said, “ My dear love, I know not how it is, but I have a strange impression, death is near us, as if it were to be some sudden stroke upon one of us. And it draws out all my soul in prayer, that we may be ready.” He then broke out, “ Lord, prepare the soul thou wilt call ! And O ! stand by the poor disconsolate one that shall be left behind !”

“ A few days before his departure, he was filled with love in an uncommon manner. The same he testified as long as he had a voice, and continued to the end, by a most lamb-like patience, in which he smiled over death, and set his last seal to the glorious truths he had so long preached among you.

“ Three years, nine months and two days, I have possessed my heavenly-minded husband. But now the sun of my earthly joy is set for ever, and my soul filled with an anguish, which only finds its consolation, in a total resignation to the will of GOD. When I was asking the Lord,

if

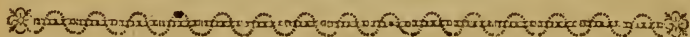
if he pleased to spare him to me a little longer, the following promise was impressed on my mind, *where I am, there shall my servants be, that they may behold my glory!* Lord, hasten the time!"

18. There is little need of adding any farther character of this man of GOD, to the foregoing account, given by one who wrote out of the fulness of her heart. I would only observe, that for many years I despaired of finding any inhabitant of *Great Britain*, that could stand in any degree of comparison with *Gregory Lopez*, or *Monfieur de Renty*. But let any impartial person judge, if *Mr. Fletcher* was at all inferior to them. Did he not experience as deep communion with GOD, and as high a measure of inward holiness, as was experienced by either one or the other of those burning and shining lights! And it is certain, his outward light shone before men, with full as bright a lustre as theirs. But if any would draw a parallel between them; there are two circumstances which should be well observed. One is, we are not assured that the writers of *their* lives did not extenuate, if not suppress their faults. And some faults we are assured there were, namely, some touches of superstition, and some of idolatry, as the worship of images, angels and saints, the virgin Mary in particular. But I have not suppressed, or even extenuated any thing in *Mr. Fletcher's* life. Indeed I know nothing that needed to be extenuated, much less to be suppressed. A second circumstance is, that the writers of *their* lives, could not have so full a knowledge of them, as I, and much more *Mrs. Fletcher* had; being eye and ear-witnesses of his whole conduct. Consequently *we knew* that his life was not sullied with any taint of idolatry or superstition. I was intimately acquainted with him for thirty years. I conversed with him morning, noon and night, without the least reserve, during a journey of many hundred miles. And in all that time, I never heard him speak an improper word, or saw him do an improper action. To conclude. Within fourscore years, I have known many excellent men, holy in heart and life. But one equal to him I have not



known; one so uniformly and deeply devoted to GOD. So unblameable a man in every respect, I have not found either in *Europe* or *America*. Nor do I expect to find another such on this side eternity.

Yet it is possible *we* may be such as he was. Let us then endeavour to follow him as he followed Christ.



## HIS E P I T A P H.



Here lies the body of  
The Rev. JOHN WILLIAM de la FLECHERE,  
Vicar of *Madeley*,  
Who was born at *Nyon*, in *Switzerland*,  
September 12th, 1729,  
And finished his course, August 14th, 1785,  
In this Village;  
Where his unexampled Labours  
Will never be forgotten.

He exercised his Ministry for the space of  
Twenty-five Years  
In this Parish,  
With uncommon Zeal and Ability.

But though many believed his report,  
Yet he might with justice have adopted  
The Lamentation of the Prophet,  
“ All the Day long have I stretched out my hands  
Unto a disobedient and gainfaying People:  
Yet surely my Judgment is with the Lord,  
And my Work with my GOD.”



## AN ACCOUNT

*Of the most remarkable Occurrences of the Life of*

JOSEPH EVERETT.

*[In a Letter to Bishop Asbury.]**(Continued from page 511.)*

**T**HIS glorious change was wrought in my soul on the thirteenth of *June*, in the year of our Lord 1763, on a precious sabbath-day, about ten or eleven o'clock. I continued in this sweet frame of spirit for some time; I felt no temptations nor trials; all was a sweet, divine calm. The world was dead to me and I was dead to it. I felt no wrong tempers in my heart, and so simple was I, that I thought verily there was no sin in my soul; and hoped to continue in that happy state to all eternity—But alas! in a short time, I found to the contrary. The enemy of my soul began to work on the unrenewed part of my nature; and I felt pride, self-will and anger, which did not distress me as it ought to do; and the reason why it did not, was this:

The ministers that preached to us, told us, it was our privilege to know our sins forgiven; but that it was impossible to live without sin, till death separated soul and body. And that all we could possibly do was to strive against it, and not give way; and that in the article of death it would be done away, and not before. They said likewise, that many of the most eminent saints of GOD did sin, and yet continued in the favour of the Lord—(to wit,) *David* in the matter of *Uriah*; that in the very act of adultery and murder he was a favourite of heaven. And that *Paul* was a good Christian, when crying out, “I am a carnal soul under sin.”

Now the preaching of this kind of doctrine, which they attempted to prove by scripture, and I believed to be true, had a bad effect; instead of pressing me forward to the en-  
tire



tire destruction of the body of sin and death, it caused me to rest and feed these brats of hell. And made me conclude, that if all the saints of both the Old and New Testament, did and must live in sin; therefore I must live in sin too. Thus I went on, deceived by such doctrine, till I lost the seed, the love of GOD, out of my soul; and was reduced to a lifeless form of godliness; till the power of it was as entirely gone as if I never had received it. Thus I fear thousands are deceived, till they drop down to hell.

I had told my experience to some of the brethren, they approved of it, and I concluded all to be well. I still hoped myself to be in the way to happiness. At this satan was well pleased, who was going about seeking to devour. But whom was he seeking to devour? Not the carnally secure; for they are devoured already. But those who through grace had broken the snare and made their escape. At last the devil found a scheme that effectually answered his purpose, he baited his hook and after some time I swallowed it.

I went to hear preaching as usual, but my conscience reproached me, and told me I was a hypocrite. I prayed in my family, but no life—my visits to my closet were short, and very seldom; and withal uncomfortable.—I would talk about religion, but my heart was after my idols. In plain truth, I lived in such a manner as I thought it impossible for a Christian to live—though my principle was, that there was no falling from justifying grace. And indeed it was impossible for me to fall, for I had shamefully fallen already.

The brethren began to look very coldly at me, and many I believe were much grieved, and were very sorry for me, and thought that I was fallen; but hoped that I should rise again; which they doubted not but I should, if ever I had been converted. For that is the criterion by which they judge. But they seeing no amendment, nor I striving for any, but growing worse and worse; they disowned me; and I never went to meeting, perhaps for months together. So that those very people began to speak evil of me, and say that I had never been converted—but the Lord knows better,

ter, for their eyes were blinded by false doctrine ; and they were ignorant that the word of GOD was fulfilled in me, as spoken by the apostle *Peter*, in his second epistle, first chapter, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9th verses. And my proud heart could not bear to be slighted by them ; for I well knew, from my intimate acquaintance with them, that not one in forty of them had ever experienced the pardoning love of GOD. And when I told them, what the Lord had done for my soul, they knew nothing of such an experience.

Thus I went on to please my master, the devil ; whose servant I was. But my life was a burthen to me. As the service of GOD is perfect freedom, so the work of the devil is the most servile drudgery. And thus saith the evangelist, *St. Luke*, on a like occasion. *While the strong man armed keeps his palace, his goods are in peace ; but when a stronger than he comes upon him, he takes away his armour, and spoils his goods.* So the unclean spirit had been driven out of my heart, and had been walking in dry places seeking rest, but finding none ; was now taking possession of his old habitation again. I was beginning to contract a relish for carnal and forbidden pleasures ; and believing the impossibility of falling from grace, which is a grand delusion ; he found the house empty of all good desires ; swept by unbelief, and garnished with delusion ; and he took up his abode there again, for near seventeen years ; with not only seven other spirits more wicked than himself, but, for aught I know, seventy times seven. For I was a worse sinner by a thousand times, than ever I was before I professed religion. And I am bold to say, that the apostate and the backslider, are more like that grand apostate the devil, than any other creatures out of hell. And I believe, if there are different apartments in the bottomless lake, they will be sure of the worst. They will not get even a sight of the common damned ; they will sink so far beneath them.

My conscience giving me no rest, I began to associate with the wicked, the children of the devil ; for I wanted to still the clamours of an abused, angry conscience. And I exactly took the method which *Cain* did to stifle his. He  
by



by the noise of axes and hammers, in building cities ; I by the hurry of business and the clasp of wicked company : and often by drinking ; and so on from one thing to another, till I could sin with the vilest.

Methinks I can compare a sinner departing from GOD, to the dropping of a stone from the top of an high mountain. Only let the stone go out of your hand, and it will not stop till it gets to the bottom, if there is nothing in the way. So is the soul when it begins to depart from the Lord. But the stone as it descends will go swifter and swifter ; so the soul, the farther it withdraws from GOD, with the greater ease it can sin ; till it can sin with as much freedom and as little remorse as a devil. And if it is not stopped by the free preventing grace of GOD, it will not stop till it reaches the bottom of hell.

I continued in this wretched state till the commencement of the war between *Great Britain* and *America* ; and then became a warm whig—inasmuch that I repaired to the muster-field to learn the use of arms ; then turned out, with many others of the same disposition, a volunteer. We took our march to the place of action ; where I conducted myself in such a manner, as gained the esteem of all my acquaintance. When I had acted my part at camp, I returned home to my friends in good credit, and was well received by them.

O what lengths will pride, or what the blind world calls honour, carry a person to !

I was well satisfied while I was in the army, that I was not prepared for death. Yet sure I am, that before I would have fled from the place of action or danger, without orders, I would have dropped dead on the spot ; though my soul must be lost for ever.

By this time some of my acquaintance had procured me a commission in the militia. And I went constantly every muster-day, till about February, in the year 1778. When I returned from the camp, there was a people called Methodists had come into the neighbourhood where I lived, and were preaching and telling the people, that every body might be saved ; which was a doctrine that I did not approve of,  
and

and I was determined to oppose them. For I had not the least distant thought that they were sent of GOD; but thought it was right to oppose them: which rendered what I did pardonable. This is what the apostle St. *Paul* alludes to, when he says, *He found mercy because he did it ignorantly, in unbelief*. Indeed, I went to hear one preach whose name was *R. W.* some time before, but to no purpose, because I did not quit my sin; though I know that I felt a measure of power. Thus the preaching of the gospel to thousands, is like sowing seed on the way-side. I still continued to persecute them at all times, when opportunity offered; but like all the rest of the devil's children, always behind their backs, or at a distance. As I have frequently seen since, our greatest enemies are those who will not hear us; and if at any time they do come out, they pay so little attention to what they hear, and run away with a sentence here and there, that they fill the hearts of the people with prejudice. Thus the word becomes a favour of death unto death. I think that prejudice is one of the first-born of hell. It was grace, mere grace that prevented my eternal ruin.

In this way I went on, from the time I left the camp till the spring of 1778. I went one evening to a neighbour's house, to hear one exhort; but got no profit by going: the reason was, because I was prejudiced against the speaker, and filled with unbelief. I did not like to hear the people make such a noise, though I liked a noise in the tavern well enough. I left the place, and spoke evil of the preacher. All this time there was the greatest intimacy between me and the enemies of the Lord; till about the 14th of March, I went to one of the neighbour's on some business; the woman of the house told me there was to be preaching at Mr. *White's* that evening, and asked me if I would not go; I told her I thought not, for I did not like them. She knew that I did not, but continued to persuade me until I went away. On my going home, I found two men there who were just setting off to the meeting; I told them if they would stop until I got ready, I would go with them. They did, and I set off with them, without inquiring why or for what

I went



I went—so mysterious are the works of Divine Providence, whose footsteps are in the deep. When I came there the congregation was collecting; and at early candle-light who should come down to preach, but you; it was the first time I ever saw you. After singing a hymn and prayer, you expounded part of the second chapter of Judges, to which I gave the strictest attention. After the meeting was ended, and I was going home, some of the Methodists asked me how I liked what I had heard. I told them I found no fault with it. They seemed to be glad. The exposition had not the least tendency to displease, for it was explained in a practical and not in a doctrinal manner: and there was no fault to be found, unless I rejected it because it was delivered by a Methodist-preacher; which is too much the case in this polite age, especially among the rich and the great, the honourable children of the devil.

From my own experience, I see that to preach principles is not attended with salutary effects on the hearts of the people: because principles and religion are two things. For, positive I am, that a man may have a well-digested system of principles, and not be acquainted with religion; for principles may be learned, as a school-boy learns arithmetic or the mathematics; but religion is the love of GOD shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

I do not remember that any particular part of the discourse had any alarming power on my conscience, at that time; but this I well know, that prejudice subsided, and from that evening a way was made for conviction. Before this, I had no power to pray; after this, I found power to pray: before this, I could not attend to the concerns of my soul; after this, I had power. I had not bowed my knees in private for twelve or fourteen years, but I obtained liberty after this.

I compare the human soul sometimes to a castle that we cannot get in or out of, without a key. Let the key be lost, the door must continue shut. This had been the case with me. I once had the key, but the devil had got it from me. The Son of GOD says, "Without me, ye can nothing;

nothing; and this is the case with thousands: the Lord offers the power, the key to all; some accept of it and use it, and thereby save their souls; others receive it for a while, and afterward neglect to use it, and it is taken from them. While the greatest part of mankind, for the love of riches, honours and pleasures, pay no attention to the things that belong to their peace; and like the unbelieving Jews, everlastingly perish.

I now felt the evident returns of GOD's grace and power to revisit my soul, which had been so long dead and barren. This was like the return of the cheering spring after a long and tedious winter. I likewise observed the devil to oppose the Spirit of GOD, who by his grace was, as it were, brooding over the dark abyss of my soul. I did not feel it as a spirit of peace and consolation, but as a spirit of conviction; to enlighten and empower me to use every means and method to save my soul.

I began now to be weary of keeping evil company. Military affairs began to sink in my esteem. I saw the necessity of using private prayer, and that with fervour; of reading the Bible, and meditation.

By this time, the eyes of the people began to be upon me. They saw an alteration in my behaviour. I had lost the martial spirit; and in some degree I had got the spirit of humility. This the devil could not put up with. He began to rouse his forces, to enquire into the cause of this mighty change.

Those that used to be my only companions, now stood aloof and looked very coolly at me;—and I in my turn paid as little regard to what they said or did. They knew me too well to carry matters too far; for I was as ready to vindicate my proceedings as they were to condemn. The Methodists likewise had their eyes on me; and I doubt not but for good. They observed some alteration in my external conduct; and especially my much respected friend E. W. took particular notice of me, and being a person of understanding as well as piety, guest at the cause, and used every prudential means to render the conviction effectual. He fre-



quently asked me home with him from places of preaching ; to converse on the subject of Methodism. For he well knew that I was calvinistic in principles ; and that those principles were destructive in their tendency to religion : which I never had seen. For which reason he used to furnish me with Mr. *Wesley's* and *Fletcher's* writings, to discover to me the difference between Calvinism and Methodism. And I doubt not but his pious endeavour had its desired effect. For he did it with such prudence and caution, that he entirely prevented the least prejudice ; and made way for liberal principles to take place.

I remember to have heard him say these words at a certain time, that “ if Christ died for all the world, all the world was salvable ; and they that were lost, were lost by their own fault : ” which gave me more insight into the scheme of redemption than ever I got before, by all the reading, preaching and conversation that I had *practised*. But I had not yet obtained the one thing I wanted ; the pardoning love of GOD. Yet through grace I was determined to have it, or die in the attempt.

I now found my former experience to be useful to me ; and I well knew, if ever I was taken into the favour of GOD, which way it must come. Methinks it was made known to me, that if I did not improve that present season of grace, that the Lord would cast me off for ever. This struck me deep. My black ingratitude to an indulgent benefactor made me ashamed. I think I was every day more and more engaged with the Lord to save my soul ; and I found the devil as much engaged to prevent my salvation. Often in retiring to private devotion, I have felt the spirit of the devil in my very flesh, striving to make me ashamed of those duties, in which I was seeking the Lord. It seems as if I have heard the foul fiend say—“ What ! you are at prayers again, are you ? you had better quit, for after a while you will tire and leave off as you did before. ”—Thus I had fears within, and fightings without : for by this time I was a bye-word. However, I paid very little regard to these things ;

things ; knowing by scripture as well as by past experience, that they who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

[Continued at page 601.]



*An extract of a letter from PHILIP BRUCE, elder of the Methodist Episcopal church, to Bishop Coke, dated Portsmouth, Virginia, March 25, 1788.*

*Reverend and very dear Sir,*

**T**IS with pleasure I take my pen to write to you, brother, an account of GOD's gracious dealings with us in these parts of the Lord's vineyard ; for certainly the work has been extraordinary : vast numbers flocking into the fold of Christ from every quarter. In many places in this circuit, as soon as the preacher begins to speak, the power of GOD appears to be present ; which is attended with trembling among the people, and falling down ; some lie void of motion or breath, others are in strong convulsions : and thus they continue, till the Lord raises them up, which is attended with emotions of joy and rapture. When one gets happy, it spreads like a flame : so that one after another, they arise to join in the praises of their loving Redeemer.

But the greatest work in many parts of this circuit is among the blacks. In some places it seems as if they would all turn unto the Lord. The following is only a specimen. A few nights past we held a night-meeting for the negroes in the *Iste of Wight* county. Soon after preaching began, there arose a cry among the poor slaves (of which there was a great number present) which in a short time drowned the preaching : a number was on the floor crying for mercy, but soon one and another arose praising GOD. Those who were happy, would surround those who were careless, with such alarming exhortations, as appeared sufficient to soften the hardest hearts. If they could get them to hang down their heads, they would begin to shout and praise GOD,  
and



and the others would soon begin to tremble and sink. I saw a number (some who at first appeared to be most stubborn) brought to the floor, and there lie crying till most of them got happy. But the conversion of the poor blacks gives huge offence to the rich and great. I suppose if they dared, they would tear us in pieces: but through the grace of GOD, we regard them not, and had rather offend one half of the world to save the other, than let them all go quietly to hell together. The work has been chiefly carried on, by the instrumentality of brother *Jackson*, in this circuit.

But great as the work is with us, it loses all report; the work above us is so far superior to what it is here, especially in *Suffex* and *Brunswick*. Brother *Cox* informs me, that between twelve and fifteen hundred whites have been converted in his circuit, besides a great number of blacks. Here liberty prevails. A friend informed me that at the *February* court in *Suffex*, the Methodists manumitted above an hundred, at that one court.

Brother *Easter* informs me, that by the best account he can make, there have been two thousand whites converted in his circuit this past year. The work has likewise spread very considerably in other circuits to the Southward and Westward. Great is the joy, great is the glory. Surely *America* will become the mart of nations for piety. I remain your affectionate brother in Christ.

PHILIP BRUCE.

*From Miss E. R. to the Rev. J. Wesley.*

Otley, May 23, 1774.

Rev. Sir,

THE character you recommend is truly amiable: may GOD help me to follow *Miranda* up the steep of excellence!

On the Sunday morning you left us at *Birstal*, several of us joined in beseeching GOD to make us all his own.

While

While I was praying that the enemies I had seen that day, might be seen no more for ever, the Lord applied such promises to my soul as encouraged me much. Yet I hardly durst lay hold on them, unbelief striving so hard to prevent my entering into rest: but the Lord continued so to bless me, that at last, I could not doubt: all I feared was, losing what I had received: which made me backward in speaking of it. I thought I would wait and see how it would be with me by and by.

On my return to Otley, my soul was still kept near to GOD; but the enemy kept whispering, "it will not be always so; a few days hence thy inbred foes will again return; thou wilt be brought from the sweet rest thou now enjoyest, to thy former state." When these thoughts were suggested, I flew to Jesus by prayer, who heard and helped me. But still I did not speak of the great things GOD had done for me, for fear I should not keep the blessing. But all the week I lived as in the suburbs of heaven: Jesus was all in all to me! At last, not being able to eat my morsel alone any longer, on Sunday I told my band what GOD had done for my soul. After this, I was tempted I had done wrong; but on crying to Jesus, Satan was put beneath my feet: and every time I have since declared the goodness of GOD in this respect, he has sweetly shined on me.

At present I feel I am nothing in myself; but Jesus feeds me with his love from day to day. On this account I find him very precious indeed; and to love him more and more is all I want on earth.

Private prayer has been very sweet to me of late. I find such a holy boldness, in telling Jesus my wants, as tongue cannot express. And though my wants are many, my chief request is, to be filled with all the fulness of GOD.

O sir, how great is the blessedness of living by faith! May I prove it more and more, till faith is sweetly lost in sight! O what a field of tresa delights do I see before me! I am lost in wonder! They are all for me! Jesus, and all he has, is mine! O blessed portion! I have a goodly heritage



tage indeed! May I prize it, and walk worthy of it all my days!

I hope, dear sir, you will reprove and advise me as occasion shall require. In doing which you will greatly oblige

Your unworthy friend in the gospel, E. R.

*A short account of the death of Mrs. PECK, of Ensham:  
written by Mr. WILLIAM SHEPHERD.*

MRS. Peck was delivered on Wednesday last of two fine boys, who are likely to live. She remained tolerably well till Friday morning, when she complained of a pain in her bowels. Dr. Wall, of Oxford, was sent for, who used every means in his power to save her. But it seems GOD had otherwise determined; for a scarlet fever came on furiously, attended with a putrid sore throat. Her milk likewise was kept back, which so affected her head, that it took away her senses, and threw her into a violent agony, which continued, with very little intermission, till twelve o'clock last night, when GOD took her to himself!

She was able only to speak once, (after she was seized with the fever) when looking up to Mr. Peck, she said, "I am now going home!" Her pain then coming on more violently, she spoke no more: but the smiles on her countenance, and the other motions which she made, perfectly satisfied all who were with her, that her mind was quite happy in GOD. They all said, they never found the power of GOD so sensibly present, as while they were commending her soul to him, just before she expired.

I have known her several years, and I cannot say I ever saw such a pattern of hospitality. Her house and heart were open to receive all who were travelling in the way to Sion.

But she had a peculiar regard for all the messengers of GOD, particularly Mr. Wesley; and thought no expence or labour great, if she could but make them comfortable in themselves, and help them forward in their Master's work.

By

By her sudden and happy death, I seem to be more crucified to this vain and uncertain world; and more determined to give myself up to the service of GOD; and thereby to lay a good foundation against the time to come, that (through infinite mercy) I may lay hold on eternal life.

Oxford, Dec. 18, 1786.

W. S.



*A Letter from Mr. HOWELL HARRIS, to a Friend.*

*Pembroke, Dec. 4, 1741.*

*Dear Brother,*

I Hope that this will find you coming up out of the wilderness, out of yourself, out of creatures, out of your own will, and out of your own wisdom, leaning on the Beloved. When we fall into nothing in ourselves, we are found in him; when we cease from our own works, he begins to work in us; and when we deny our own wisdom, and see it to be but folly, we shall have wisdom from him. O may we never rest till all the works of the devil are destroyed in us! Till we can say, "The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of GOD:" and can add, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me." Then, and not till then, have we true rest to our souls.

I hope you will still shew your love to me, by pleading for me at the throne of grace, that I may not stop short of any privilege promised in the gospel: but that I may be the salt of the earth; have my conversation in heaven; have fellowship with the Father and the Son, and adorn the gospel of GOD our Saviour in all things.

It is a common thing, I see, to be an almost Christian, and to call every conviction, conversion; every little feeling and change, faith; and every sorrow, evangelical repentance. But indeed I see the way very narrow, and fear there are but few that find it. Those that have once really known our dear Lord, cannot easily rest without daily and hourly



hourly feeding on him. Indeed he is to such as know him, in all his offices, names and relations (through the discovery of the Holy Ghost) a pearl of great price; truly precious and altogether lovely. They desire him; they feed on him, talk of him, and live to him; and become more and more like him: dying daily to all that is visible; and living a life hid with Christ in GOD, till they know no one after the flesh; but feel an inward, secret union, and spiritual fellowship, with all who know and love him.

Pray much then, that the spirit and temper of our dear Lord may be more regarded. Where his spirit prevails, there is meekness and love, humility and tenderness for all that belong to him. Indeed we cannot glorify GOD, but while we walk in his Spirit; nor can we see, or hear, or feel spiritually, but in his Spirit: and where his Spirit is, there is liberty.

I hope that all among you forget the things behind: (I am sure that disputing, evil-furmising, and bigotry, are things which are or ought to be left behind) and press forward to those that are before. May you all seek for a faith which overcomes the world, and lives upon Christ! If Satan is every moment tempting, and if we continually stand in need of fresh supplies, then we should every moment see that the eye of our faith be looking up to its author and finisher, till we are all changed from glory to glory.

I am your affectionate Brother,

H. HARRIS.

POETRY.

## Poetry.

### BIRTH-DAY REFLECTIONS.

**O**NCE more return'd, I see my natal day:  
 Think, O my soul! how time has stole away;  
 As swift as sands run down the slipp'ry glass,  
 So swift our fleeting, short-liv'd moments pass!  
 But canst thou think with pleasure now they're gone,  
 On one good word or work thou e'er hast done?  
 Say, canst thou bear the retrospective view?  
 Contented bid the time that's past adieu?  
 Turn all the leaves of sacred conscience o'er,  
 Nor be afraid to search her hidden store?  
 But O, remember while you thus look back,  
 And life's review this hour begin to take;  
 That he, whose eyes are as a flame of fire,  
 Has ever seen each thought and each desire;  
 Each secret purpose constantly survey'd,  
 And every action in his balance weigh'd.

With sober reason from my early youth  
 I sought the path of virtue and of truth.  
 Unruly riot and tumultuous noise,  
 My soul disdain'd as low unmeaning joys.  
 These were too gross: in pleasures more refin'd  
 I aim'd to "burnish" and improve my mind.  
 The serious book, or sweet melodious song,  
 Or cheerful converse, did the hours prolong;  
 Or walks enchanting stole the time away,  
 While fanning zephyrs cool'd the sultry day.  
 When hoary winter, with his shiv'ring face  
 And fullen gloom, resum'd, in turn, his place,



With lively tales we made the ev'ning smile,  
 Or harmless sports the tedious hours beguile;  
 And oft to gain instruction, how to shun  
 The wily arts of man's insidious tongue,  
 In well-wrought tragedy we saw display'd  
 The mournful scene of innocence betray'd:  
 Or cruel monarchs thrown from empire down,  
 Whose fell ambition had usurp'd the crown.

Thus eighteen years had smoothly roll'd around,  
 While what I sought, alas! I had not found.  
 The solid happiness, the bliss refin'd,  
 Fair peace serene, which Heav'n for man design'd,  
 Was quite a stranger to my anxious heart:  
 I neither knew nor lov'd the better part.  
 No wanton act had stain'd my virtuous life,  
 No dire revenge, no hate or envious strife.  
 Say then, ye moralists! why should I bear  
 The worm of conscience gnawing to despair?  
 I knew the cause, though in your schools untaught,  
 My GOD was not in all my wand'ring thought.

Conscience awaken'd, thus to reason cry'd,  
 What is thy confidence? thy virtuous pride?  
 What is thy hope (when by almighty pow'r  
 Rais'd from the dead) of living evermore?

Reason alarm'd, trembling and pale, looks back,  
 To find what friends in virtue she can make.  
 Dreadful eternity extended lies,  
 And strips the soul of ev'ry fair disguise:  
 While conscience unrelenting still maintains  
 Her right to raise new fears, and cause new pains.

What canst thou, feeble reason, do? she said,  
 Thy hope is vanish'd, and thy joy is fled,  
 Thou didst presume thyself th'unerring guide:  
 What paths of pure devotion hast thou try'd?  
 Did pray'r begin each consecrated day?  
 Has time on trifles ne'er been thrown away?

And

And didst thou earnestly and always strive  
 From every sin each sacred hour to live?  
 Copying thy Saviour's pattern, mercy show,  
 "Reprove thy friend, befriend thy greatest foe;  
 Teach grief to smile, and ignorance to know."

Alas! said reason, faltering with a sigh,  
 That I have sometimes err'd I can't deny;  
 But I will hope, and lay aside my fear,  
 For GOD all mercy cannot be severe.

Conscience reply'd, that hope is false and vain,  
 And like the first will quickly end in pain.  
 Think'st thou one attribute alone shall shine?  
 Does only mercy prove our GOD divine?  
 Justice and mercy both to him belong,  
 But injur'd justice cries aloud for wrong.  
 Deprav'd, corrupted totally thou art,  
 Depriv'd of ev'ry good in ev'ry part!  
 Forbear, vain reason, then; attempt no more  
 To boast of wisdom, goodness, or of pow'r:  
 Thy goodness like the morning-cloud is gone,  
 Or early dew dry'd by the radiant sun.  
 How wilt thou then appear, what refuge see?  
 For *Tekel* must, alas! be wrote on thee.

Despair then sadly press'd my sinking mind,  
 Which peace or pleasure now in nought could find,  
 Nor sprightly dance, nor soft symphonious strain,  
 Nor books, nor social converse eas'd my pain:  
 Till pure Religion came, with looks divine,  
 With promis'd glory, and with grace benign.  
 Illum'd by her, a ray of heavenly light  
 Broke in upon my soul's enraptur'd sight:  
 Then lively Hope stretch'd forth her golden wing,  
 And Faith triumphant sweetly learn'd to sing.  
 Divinely taught, I chose my favourite seat,  
 The posts of fair angelic wisdom's gate.  
 No longer dazzled, and misled by show,  
 With scorn I view'd the pomp of all below;

Resolv'd



Resolv'd to live as righteous men have dy'd,  
And nothing know but Jesus crucify'd.  
Walking serene in wisdom's pleasant ways,  
(Whose flow'ry paths are peace and pleasantness)  
The joys of perfect saints I long'd to see,  
And drop the load of frail mortality.

But, oh! not so! the Saviour did ordain  
"To suffer first, and then with him to reign."  
Thy will be done, thy sorrows let me share,  
And after thee the cross in silence bear;  
Since in thy life I can the path descry,  
That leads to glorious immortality.

Such were my breathings in the solemn hour,  
When first sweet mercy shed the kindly show'r  
Of peace and love from yon divine abode,  
And in my heart reveal'd the Tri-une GOD:  
Such ardent, constant love, I wish to feel,  
While humbly through this vale of tears I steal.

O Thou! to whom my secret thoughts are known,  
Who seest my tears, and hear'st my inward groan,  
Attend my fervent, earnest, humble pray'r;  
Though most unworthy, make me, Lord, thy care;  
From all extremes, O keep me near to thee,  
Alike from sin and superstition free.  
Ne'er let me, Lord! thy tender Spirit grieve,  
By wand'ring from thee while on earth I live.  
Still, by thy word, direct me in the road,  
Let ev'ry Birth-day find me nearer GOD:  
Thus lowly may I live, and blessed die,  
And after death no stone tell where I lie.

THE

## Arminian Magazine,

For DECEMBER 1790.



## PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED.

[BY JOHN WESLEY, M.A.]

[Concluded from page 529.]

**A** GAIN. They *had tasted of the heavenly gift* (emphatically so called) *and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost.* So St. Peter likewise couples them together, Acts ii. 38. *Be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* Whereby the love of GOD was shed abroad in their hearts, with all the other fruits of the Spirit.

The expression they *had tasted of the heavenly gift*, is taken from the psalmist, *Taste and see that the Lord is good.* As if he had said, Be ye as assured of his love, as of any thing you see with your eyes. And let the assurance thereof be sweet to your soul, as honey is to your tongue.

“ But this means only, they had some notions of remission of sins and heaven, and some desires after them. “ And they had received the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost.” This you *affirm*; but without any colour of proof.

It remains, that those who see the light of the glory of GOD, in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits



fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless so fall from GOD, as to perish everlastingly.

LXXVI. Seventhly, Those who live by faith, may yet fall from GOD, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the apostle. *The just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him*, Heb. x. 38. *The just* (the justified person, of whom only this can be said) *shall live by faith*; even now shall live the life which is hid with Christ in GOD; and if he endures unto the end, shall live with GOD for ever. *But if any man draw back, saith the Lord, my soul shall have no pleasure in him*; that is, I will utterly cast him off: and, accordingly, the drawing back here spoken of, is termed in the verse immediately following, *drawing back to perdition*.

“But the person supposed to draw back, is not the same with him that is said to live by faith.”

I answer, 1. Who is it then? Can any man draw back from faith who never came to it? But

2. Had the text been fairly translated, there had been no pretence for this objection. For the original runs thus: *Ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται καὶ ἐὰν υποσείληται*—If *ὁ δίκαιος the just man that lives by faith* (so the expression necessarily implies, there being no other *nominative* to the *verb*) *draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him*.

“But your translation too is inaccurate.” Be pleased to shew we wherein?

“I grant he may draw back: and yet not draw back to perdition.” But then, it is not the drawing back which is here spoken of.

“However here is only a supposition, which proves no fact.” I observe you take that as a general rule, suppositions prove no facts. But this is not true. They do not always: but many times they do. And whether they do or not in a particular text, must be judged from the nature of the supposition, and from the preceding and following words.

“But the inserting *any man* in the text, is agreeable to the grammatical construction of these words.” This I totally

tally deny. There is no need of any such insertion. The preceding *nominative* suffices.

“ But one that lives by faith, cannot draw back. *For whom he justified, them he also glorified.*”

This proves no more, than that all who are glorified, are pardoned and sanctified first.

“ Nay, but St. Paul says, *ye are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in GOD. When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*”

Most sure, if you endure to the end. *Whosoever believeth in him to the end, shall never die.*

LXXVII. “ But, to come more home to the point. I say, this text is so far from militating against perseverance, that it greatly establishes it.”

You are very unhappy in your choice of texts to establish this doctrine. Two of those which establish it, just as this does, we have seen already. Now pray let us hear, how you prove perseverance from this text.

“ Very easily. Here are two sorts of persons mentioned; he that lives by faith, and he that draws back to perdition.”

Nay, this is the very question. I do not allow that two persons are mentioned in the text. I have shewn, it is one and the same person, who once lived by faith, and afterwards draws back.

Yet thus much I allow: two sorts of believers are in the next verse mentioned; some that draw back, and some that persevere. And I allow, the apostle adds, *We are not of them who draw back unto perdition.* But what will you infer from thence? This is so far from contradicting what has been observed before, that it manifestly confirms it. It is a further proof, that there are those who draw back unto perdition, although these were not of that number.

“ I must still aver, that the text is rightly translated; which I prove thus:

“ The original text, Hab. ii. 4. runs thus: *Behold, his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith.*

“ This



"This the seventy render, *Εαν υποσείληται, ου ευδοκει η ψυχη εν αυτω· ο δε δικαιος εκ πίστεως ου ζήσεται.* *If a man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him. But the just shall live by my faith, i. e. faith in me.*

"Now here the man in the former clause who *draws back*, is distinguished from him in the following clause, *who lives by faith.*"

"But the apostle quotes the text from this translation."

True; but he does not "distinguish the man in the former clause who *draws back*, from him in the latter who *lives by faith.*" So far from it, that he quite inverts the order of the sentence, placing the latter clause of it first. And by this means it comes to pass, that although in translating this text from the *Septuagint*, we must insert *a man* because there is no *nominative* preceding; yet in translating it from the apostle, there is no need or pretence for inserting it, seeing *ο δικαιος* stands just before.

Therefore such an insertion is a palpable violence to the text; which consequently is not rightly translated;

It remains, that those who live by faith, may yet fall from GOD, and perish everlastingly.

LXXVIII. Eighthly, those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may so fall as to perish everlastingly.

For thus again saith the apostle: *If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses's law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of GOD, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing.*

It is undeniably plain, 1. That the person mentioned here, was once sanctified by the blood of the covenant: 2. That he afterwards by known, wilful sin, trod under foot the Son of GOD: and, 3. That he hereby incurred a sorer punishment than death, namely, death everlasting.

"Nay,

“ Nay, the immediate antecedent to the relative *he*, is the “ Son of GOD. Therefore it was he, not the apostate, who “ was sanctified (set apart for his priestly office) by the blood “ of the covenant.”

Either you forgot to look at the original, or your memory fails. *The Son of GOD* is not the immediate antecedent to the relative *he*. The words run thus : *Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of GOD, και το αιμα της διαθυνης κοινον ηγισταμενος, εν ω ηγιασθη*. You see *ηγισταμενος*, not *υιος*, is the immediate antecedent to the relative *he*. Consequently it is the apostate, not the Son of GOD, who is here said to be sanctified.

“ If he was sanctified, yet this cannot be understood of “ inward sanctification. Therefore it must mean, either that “ he said, he was sanctified ; or, that he made an outward “ profession of religion.”

Why cannot the word be understood in its proper, natural sense, of inward sanctification ?

“ Because that is by the Spirit of GOD.” From this very consideration it appears, that this must be understood of inward sanctification : for the words immediately following are, *and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace*, even that grace, whereby *he was once sanctified*.

It remains, that those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may yet perish everlastingly.

LXXIX. If you imagine these texts are not sufficient to prove, that a true believer may finally fall, I will offer a few more to your consideration, which I would beg you to weigh further at your leisure.

Matt. v. 13. *Ye (Christians) are the salt of the earth. But if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted ? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

Chap. xii. 43, &c. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man (as he does out of every true believer) he walketh through dry places seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return—and he taketh with him seven other spi-*



rits—and they enter in, and dwell there. And the last state of that man is worse than the first.

Chap. xxiv. 10, &c. And then shall many be offended—and the love (towards GOD and man) of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved.

Ver. 45, &c. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household?—But if that evil servant (wise and faithful as he was once) shall begin to smite his fellow-servants—the Lord shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites, apostates, being no better than they.

Luke xxi. 34. Take heed to yourselves (ye that believe) lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. Plainly implying, that otherwise they would not be accounted worthy to stand before the Son of man.

John v. 14. Sin no more, lest a worse thing (than any temporal evil) come unto thee.

Chap. viii. 31, 32. If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

1 Cor. ix. 27. I keep my body under—lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away,

1 Cor. x. 3, &c. Our fathers did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink (for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.) But with many of them GOD was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness—Now these things were our examples—Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.

2 Cor. vi. 1. We then, as workers together with him, beseech you, that ye receive not the grace of GOD in vain. But this were impossible, if none that ever had it could perish.

Gal. v. 4. Ye are fallen from grace.

Chap. vi. 9. We shall reap, if we faint not. Therefore we shall not reap, if we do.

Heb. iii. 14. We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.

2 Pet. iii. 17. *Beware, lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.*

2 John ver. 8. *Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought.*

Rev. iii. 11. *Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.* And to conclude,

*So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.* Matt. xviii. 35. So! How? He will retract the pardon he had given, and deliver you to the tormentors.

LXXX. "Why then you make salvation conditional." I make it neither conditional nor unconditional? But I declare just what I find in the Bible, neither more nor less; namely, that it is bought for every child of man, and actually given to every one that believeth. If you call this conditional salvation, GOD made it so from the beginning of the world: and he hath declared it so to be, at sundry times, and in divers manners: of old by Moses and the prophets, and in latter times by Christ and his apostles.

"Then I can never be saved; for I can perform no conditions; for I can do nothing." No, nor I; nor any man under heaven,—without the grace of GOD. But *I can do all things through Christ strengthening me.* So can you. So can every believer. And he *has* strengthened, and will strengthen you more and more, if you do not wilfully resist, till you quench his Spirit.

LXXXI. "Nay, but GOD must work *irresistibly* in me, "or I shall never be saved." Hold! Consider that word. You are again advancing a doctrine which has not one plain, clear text to support it. I allow, GOD *may* possibly, at *some times*, work irresistibly in *some* souls. I believe he *does*. But can you infer from hence, that he *always* works thus in all that are saved? Alas, my brother, what kind of conclusion is this? And by what scripture will you prove it? Where, I pray, is it written, that none are saved but by irresistible grace? By almighty grace, I grant; by that power alone, to which all things are possible. But shew me  
any



any one plain scripture for this, That "all-saving grace is irresistible."

LXXXII. But this doctrine is not only unsupported by scripture. It is flatly contrary thereto.

How will you reconcile it (to instance in a very few) with the following texts?

Matt. xxii. 3, &c. *He sent to call them, and they would not come.*

Mark vi. 5. *He could do no mighty works there, because of their unbelief. Compare with Matt. xiii. 58.*

Luke v. 17. *There were Pharisees, and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. Nevertheless they were not healed in fact, as the words immediately following shew.*

Luke vii. 29. *The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of GOD, against themselves.*

Luke xiii. 34. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children, and ye would not.*

John vi. 63, 64. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit. But there are some of you that believe not. Therefore that Spirit did not work irresistibly.*

Acts vii. 51. *Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*

Chap. xiii. 46. *Ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life.*

Heb. iii. 7, 8. *To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*

Ibid. ver. 12. *Take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living GOD.*

Heb. xii. 25. *See, that ye refuse not him that speaketh.*

LXXXIII. I do but just give you a specimen of the innumerable scriptures which might be produced on this head. And why will you adhere to an opinion not only unsupported by, but utterly contrary both to reason and scripture? Be pleased to observe here also, that you are not to consider the doctrine of irresistible grace by itself, any more than that of unconditional election, or final perseverance: but as it stands

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in connection with unconditional reprobation, that millstone which hangs about the neck of your whole hypothesis.

Will you say, "I adhere to it, because of its usefulness." Wherein does that usefulness lie? "It exalts GOD, and debases man." In what sense does it exalt GOD? GOD in himself is exalted above all praise. Your meaning therefore I suppose is this: it displays to others how highly he is exalted, in justice, mercy, and truth. But the direct contrary of this has been shewn at large: it has been shewn by various considerations, that GOD is not exalted, but rather, dishonoured, and that in the highest degree, by supposing him to despise the work of his own hands, the far greater part of the souls which he hath made. And as to the debasing of man; if you mean, "This opinion truly humbles the men that hold it." I fear it does not; I have not perceived (and I have had large occasions to make the trial) that all, or even the generality of them that hold it, are more humble than other men. Neither, I think, will you say, that none are humble, who hold it not; so that it is neither a *necessary* nor a *certain* means of humility. And if it be so sometimes, this only proves that GOD can bring good out of evil.

LXXXIV. The truth is, neither this opinion nor that, but the love of GOD humbles man, and that only. Let but this be shed abroad in his heart, and he abhors himself in dust and ashes. As soon as this enters into his soul, lowly shame covers his face. That thought, What is GOD? What hath he done for *me*? is immediately followed by, What am I? And he knoweth not what to do, or where to hide, or how to abase himself enough, before the great GOD of love, of whom he now knoweth, that as his majesty is, so is his mercy. Let him who has *felt* this (whatever be his opinion) say, whether he could then take glory to himself? Whether he could ascribe to himself any part of his salvation, or the glory of any good word or thought? Lean then, who will, on that broken reed for humility; but let the love of GOD humble my soul!



LXXXV. "Why, this is the very thing which recommends it. This doctrine makes men love GOD." I answer as before: accidentally it may; because GOD can draw good out of evil. But you will not say, all who hold it, love GOD; so it is no *certain* means to that end. Nor will you say, that none love him who hold it not. Neither, therefore, is it a *necessary* means. But indeed when you talk at all of its "making men love GOD," you know not what you do. You lead men into more danger than you are aware of. You almost unavoidably lead them into *resting* on that opinion: you cut them off from a true dependance on the Fountain of living waters, and strengthen them in hewing to themselves broken cisterns, which can hold no water.

LXXXVI. This is my grand objection to the doctrine of reprobation, or (which is the same) unconditional election. That it is an error I know; because if this were true, the whole scripture must be false. But it is not only for this, because it is an error, that I so earnestly oppose it, but because it is an error of so pernicious consequence to the souls of men; because it directly and naturally tends to hinder the inward work of GOD in every stage of it.

LXXXVII. For instance. Is a man careless and unconcerned? utterly dead in trespasses and sins? Exhort him then (suppose he is of your own opinion) to take some care of his immortal soul. "I take care!" says he, "What signifies *my* care? Why, what must be, must be. If I am elect, I must be saved; and if I am not, I must be damned." And the reasoning is as just and strong, as it is obvious and natural. It avails not to say, "men may *abuse* any doctrine." So they may. But this is not *abusing* yours. It is the plain, natural *use* of it. The premises cannot be denied (on your scheme): and the consequence is equally clear and undeniable. Is he a little serious and thoughtful now and then, though generally cool and lukewarm? Press him then to stir up the gift that is in him, to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. Alas! says he, what can I do? You know man can do nothing.

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If you reply, but you don't *desire* salvation: you are not willing to be saved. It may be so, says he, but GOD shall make me willing in the day of his power. So waiting for irresistible grace, he falls faster asleep than ever. See him again, when he thoroughly awakes out of sleep; when in spite of his principles, fearfulness and trembling are come upon him, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed him. How then will you comfort him that is well-nigh swallowed up of overmuch sorrow? If at all, by applying the promises of GOD. But against these he is fenced on every side. These indeed, says he, are great and precious promises. But they belong to the elect only. Therefore they are nothing to me. I am not of that number. And I never can be: for his decree is unchangeable. Has he already tasted of the good word, and the powers of the world to come? Being justified by faith, hath he peace with GOD? Then sin hath no dominion over him. But by and by, considering he may fall *foully* indeed, but cannot fall *finally*, he is not so jealous over himself as he was at first; he grows a little and a little slacker, till e'er long he falls again into the sin, from which he was clean escaped. As soon as you perceive he is entangled again and overcome, you apply the scriptures relating to that state. You conjure him not to harden his heart any more, lest his last state be worse than the first. "How can that be," says he? "Once in grace always in grace; and I am sure I was in grace once. You shall never tear away my shield." So he sins on, and sleeps on, till he awakes in hell.

LXXXVIII. The observing these melancholy examples day by day; this dreadful havoc, which the devil makes of souls, especially of those who had begun to run well, by means of this antiscriptural doctrine, constrains me to oppose it from the same principle, whereon I labour to save souls from destruction. Nor is it sufficient to ask, are there not also many who *wrest* the opposite doctrine to their own destruction? If there are, that is nothing to the point in question: for that is not the case here. Here is no *wresting*  
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at all: the doctrine of absolute predestination naturally leads to the chambers of death.

Let an instance of each kind be proposed, and the difference is so broad, he that runneth may read it. I say, "Christ died for all. He tasted death for every man, and he willeth all men to be saved." "O," says an hearer, "then I can be saved, *when* I will; so I may safely sin a little longer." No, this is no consequence from what I said: the words are *wrested*, to infer what does not follow. You say, "Christ died only for the elect: and all these must and shall be saved." "O," says an hearer, "then if I am one of the elect, I must and shall be saved. Therefore I may safely sin a little longer; for my salvation cannot fail." Now this is a fair consequence from what you said: the words are not wrested at all. No more is inferred than what plainly and undeniably follows from the premises. And the very same observation may be made, on every article of that doctrine. Every branch of it, as well as this (however the wisdom of GOD may sometimes draw good out of it) has a natural, genuine tendency, without any wrestling, either to prevent or obstruct holiness.

LXXXIX. Brethren, would ye lie for the cause of GOD? I am persuaded, ye would not. Think then, that as ye are, so am I. I speak the truth, before GOD my judge, not of those who were trained up therein, but of those who were lately brought over to your opinion. Many of these have I known, but I have not known one in ten of all that number, in whom it did not speedily work some of the above-named effects, according to the state of soul they were then in. And one only have I known among them all, after the closest and most impartial observation, who did not evidently shew, within one year, that his heart was changed, not for the better, but the worse.

XC. I know indeed, ye cannot easily believe this. But whether ye believe it or no, you believe, as well as I, that *without holiness, no man shall see the Lord*. May we not then, at least, join in this, in declaring the nature of inward holiness, and to testify to all the necessity of it?

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May we not all thus far join, in tearing away the broken reeds whereon so many rest, without either inward or outward holiness, and which they idly trust will supply its place? As far as is possible, let us join in destroying the works of the devil, and in setting up the kingdom of GOD upon earth, in promoting righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Of whatever opinion or denomination we are, we must serve either GOD or the devil. If we serve GOD, our agreement is far greater than our difference. Therefore, as far as may be, setting aside that difference, let us unite in destroying the works of the devil, in bringing all we can, from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of GOD's dear Son. And let us assist each other to value more and more the glorious grace whereby we stand, and daily to grow in that grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[*End of Predestination calmly considered.*]

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## ● S E R M O N XXIV.

### ON REVELATION xxi. 5.

*Behold, I make all things new.*

1. **W**HAT a strange scene is here opened to our view! How remote from all our natural apprehensions! Not a glimpse of what is here revealed, was ever seen in the heathen world. Not only the modern, barbarous, uncivilized Heathens have not the least conception of it; but it was equally unknown to the refined, polished Heathens of ancient *Greece* and *Rome*. And it is almost as little thought of or understood, by the generality of Christians: I mean, not barely those that are nominally such, that have the form



of godliness without the power: but even those that in a measure fear GOD, and study to work righteousness.

2. It must be allowed, that after all the researches we can make, still our knowledge of the great truth, which is delivered to us in these words, is exceedingly short and imperfect. As this is a point of mere revelation, beyond the reach of all natural faculties, we cannot penetrate far into it, nor form any adequate conception of it. But it may be an encouragement to those who have in any degree tasted of the powers of the world to come, to go as far as we can go, interpreting scripture by scripture, according to the analogy of faith.

3. The apostle, caught up in the visions of GOD, tells us in the first verse of the chapter, *I saw a new heaven and a new earth*: And adds, ver. 5, *He that sat upon the throne, said* (I believe the only words which he is said to utter throughout the whole book,) *Behold, I make all things new*.

4. Very many commentators entertain a strange opinion, that this relates only to the present state of things, and gravely tell us, that the words are to be referred to the flourishing state of the church, which commenced after the heathen persecutions. Nay, some of them have discovered, that all which the apostle speaks concerning the *new heaven and the new earth*, was fulfilled when *Constantine the great* poured in riches and honours upon the Christians. What a miserable way is this of making void the counsel of GOD, with regard to all that grand chain of events, in reference to his church, yea, and to all mankind, from the time that *John* was in *Patmos*, unto the end of the world! Nay, the line of this prophesy reaches farther still. It does not end with the present world, but shows us the things which will come to pass, when this world is no more.

5. Thus saith the Creator and Governor of the Universe, *Behold, I make all things new*: all which are included in that expression of the apostle, *A new heaven, and a new earth*. *A new heaven*. The original word in Genesis (chap. i.) is in the plural number. And indeed this is the constant language of scripture; not *heaven*, but *heavens*. According-  
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ly the ancient Jewish writers are accustomed to reckon three heavens. In conformity to which, the apostle *Paul* speaks of his being *caught up into the third heaven*. It is this, the third heaven, which is usually supposed to be the more immediate residence of GOD : so far as any residence can be ascribed to his omnipresent Spirit, who pervades and fills the whole universe. It is here (if we speak after the manner of men,) that the Lord sitteth upon his throne, surrounded by angels and archangels, and by all his flaming ministers.

6. We cannot think, that this heaven will undergo any change, any more than its great inhabitant. Surely this palace of the Most High was the same from eternity, and will be world without end. Only the inferior heavens are liable to change ; the highest of which we usually call, The starry heavens. This, *St. Peter* informs us, *is reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment, and destruction of ungodly men*. In that day, *being on fire*, it shall first *shrivel as a parchment-scroll* : then it shall *be dissolved*, and *shall pass away with a great noise* : lastly, it shall *fly from the face of him that sitteth on the throne*, and there shall be found no place for it.

7. At the same time *the stars shall fall from heaven*, the secret chain being broken, which had retained them in their several orbits from the foundation of the world. In the mean while the lower, or sublunary heaven, with the elements (or principles that compose it) *shall melt with fervent heat*, while *the earth with the works that are therein shall be burnt up*. This is the introduction to a far nobler state of things, such as it has not yet entered into the heart of men to conceive : the universal restoration which is to succeed the universal destruction. *For we look for*, says the apostle, *new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*, 2 Pet. iii. 7, &c.

8. One considerable difference there will undoubtedly be in the starry heaven, when it is created anew ; there will be no blazing stars, no comets there. Whether those horrid, eccentric orbs are half-formed planets in a chaotic state,  
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(I speak on the supposition of a plurality of worlds) or such as have undergone their general conflagration, they will certainly have no place in the new heaven, where all will be exact order and harmony. There may be many other differences between the heaven that now is, and that which will be after the renovation. But they are above our apprehension: we must leave eternity to explain them.

9. We may more easily conceive the changes which will be wrought in the lower heaven, in the region of the air. It will be no more torn by hurricanes, or agitated by furious storms or destructive tempests. Pernicious or terrifying meteors will have no more place therein. We shall have no more occasion to say,

“ There like a trumpet, loud and strong,  
Thy thunder shakes our coasts:  
While the red lightnings wave along,  
The banners of thy host!”

No: all will be then light, fair, serene: a lively picture of the eternal day.

10. All the elements (taking that word in the common sense, for the principles of which all natural beings are compounded) will be new indeed; entirely changed as to their qualities, although not as to their nature. *Fire* is at present the general destroyer of all things under the sun; dissolving all things that come within the sphere of its action, and reducing them to their primitive atoms. But no sooner will it have performed its last great office of destroying the heavens and the earth, (Whether you mean thereby one system only, or the whole fabric of the universe; the difference between one and millions of worlds being nothing before the great Creator)—When I say it has done this, the destructions wrought by fire, will come to a perpetual end. It will destroy no more, it will consume no more; it will forget its power to burn, which it possesses only during the present state of things, and be as harmless in the new heavens and earth, as it is now in the bodies of men  
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and other animals, and in the substance of trees and flowers : in all which (as late experiments shew) large quantities of ethereal fire are lodged : if it be not rather an essential, component part of every material being under the sun. But it will probably retain its vivifying power, though divested of its power to destroy.

11. It has been already observed, that the calm, placid *air*, will be no more disturbed by storms and tempests. There will be no more meteors, with their horrid glare, affrighting the poor children of men. May we not add (though at first it may sound like a paradox) that there will be no more rain. It is observable, that there was none in Paradise : a circumstance which *Moses* particularly mentions, (Gen. ii. ver. 5, 6.) *The Lord GOD had not caused it to rain upon the earth. But there went up a mist from the earth*, which then covered up the abyfs of waters, *and watered the whole face of the ground*, with moisture sufficient for all the purposes of vegetation. We have all reason to believe, that the case will be the same when Paradise is restored. Consequently there will be no more clouds or fogs ; but one bright, refulgent day. Much less will there be any poisonous damps or pestilential blasts. There will be no *firocco* in *Italy*, no parching or suffocating winds in *Arabia* : no keen north-east winds in our own country,

“ Shattering the graceful locks of yon fair trees ;”

but only pleasing, healthful breezes,

“ Fanning the earth with odoriferous wings.”

12. But what change will the element of *water* undergo, when all things are made new ? It will be in every part of the world clear and limpid, pure from all unpleasing or unhealthful mixtures, rising here and there in crystal fountains, to refresh and adorn the earth, “ with liquid lapse of murmuring stream.” For undoubtedly as there were in Paradise, there will be various rivers gently gliding along, for  
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the use and pleasure of both man and beast. But the inspired writer has expressly declared, *there will be no more sea*, (Rev. xxi. 1.) We have reason to believe, that at the beginning of the world, when GOD said, *Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear*, (Gen. i. ver. 9.) the dry land spread over the face of the water, and covered it on every side. And so it seems to have done, till, in order to the general deluge, which he had determined to bring upon the earth at once, *the windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep broken up*. But the sea will then retire within its primitive bounds, and appear on the surface of the earth no more. Neither indeed will there be any more need of the sea. For either as the ancient poet supposes,

*Omnis feret omnia tellus :*

Every part of the earth will naturally produce whatever its inhabitants want: or all mankind will procure what the whole earth affords, by a much easier and readier conveyance. For all the inhabitants of the earth, our Lord informs us, will then be *ἰσάνγιστοι equal to angels*: on a level with them in swiftness as well as strength: so that they can, quick as thought, transport themselves, or whatever they want, from one side of the globe to the other.

13. But it seems, a greater change will be wrought in the *earth*, than even in the air and water. Not that I can believe that wonderful discovery of *Jacob Behmen*, which many so eagerly contend for, that the earth itself with all its furniture and inhabitants, will then be transparent as glass. There does not seem to be the least foundation for this, either in scripture or reason. Surely not in scripture: I know not one text in the Old and New Testament, which affirms any such thing. Certainly it cannot be inferred from that text in *the Revelation*, chapter the fourth, verse the sixth, *And before the throne there was a sea of glass, like unto crystal*. And yet, if I mistake not, this is the chief, if not the only scripture which has been urged in favour of this

this opinion ! Neither can I conceive that it has any foundation in reason. It has indeed been warmly alledged, that all things would be far more beautiful, if they were quite transparent. But I cannot apprehend this : yea, I apprehend quite the contrary. Suppose every part of a human body were made transparent as crystal, would it appear more beautiful than it does now ? Nay, rather it would shock us above measure. The surface of the body, and in particular, “ the human face divine,” is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful objects that can be found under heaven. But could you look through the rosy cheek, the smooth, fair forehead, or the rising bosom, and distinctly see all that lies within, you would turn away from it with loathing and horror.

14. Let us then, in the next place, take a view of those changes which we may reasonably suppose will take place in the *earth*. It will no more be bound up with intense cold, nor parched up with extreme heat ; but will have such a temperature as will be most conducive to its fruitfulness. If in order to punish its inhabitants, GOD did of old

“ Bid his angels turn askant  
This oblique globe,”

thereby occasioning violent cold on one part, and violent heat on the other ; he will undoubtedly then order them to restore it to its original position : so that there will be a final end, on the one hand, of the burning heat, which makes some parts of it scarce habitable ; and, on the other, of

“ The rage of *Arctos* and eternal frost.”

15. And it will then contain no jarring or destructive principles within its own bosom. It will no more have any of those violent convulsions in its own bowels. It will no more be shaken or torn asunder, by the impetuous force of *earthquakes* : and will therefore need neither Vesuvius  
nor



nor *Ætna*, nor any *burning mountains* to prevent them. There will be no more horrid rocks, or frightful precipices; no wild desarts or barren sands; no impassable morasses, or unfruitful bogs, to swallow up the unwary traveller. There will doubtless be inequalities on the surface of the earth, which are not blemishes, but beauties. And though I will not affirm, That

“ Earth hath this variety from heaven,  
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale;”

yet I cannot think gently-rising hills will be any defect; but an ornament of the new-made earth. And doubtless we shall then likewise have occasion to say,

“ Lo, there his wondrous skill arrays  
The fields in cheerful green!  
A thousand herbs his hand displays,  
A thousand flowers between!”

16. And what will the general produce of the earth be? Not thorns, briars or thistles. Not any useless or fœtid weed; not any poisonous, hurtful or unpleasant plant; but every one that can be conducive in any wise either to our use or pleasure. How far beyond all that the most lively imagination is now able to conceive! We shall no more regret the loss of the terrestrial paradise, or sigh at that well-devised description of our great poet,

“ Then shall this mount  
Of paradise by might of waves be mov’d  
Out of his place, push’d by the horned flood,  
With all its verdure spoil’d and trees adrift,  
Down the great river to the opening gulph,  
And there take root, an island salt and bare!”

For all the earth shall then be a more beautiful paradise than *Adam* ever saw.

17. Such will be the state of the new earth, with regard to the meaner, the inanimate parts of it. But great as this change will be, it is little, it is nothing, in comparison of that which will then take place throughout all animated nature. In the living part of the creation were seen the most deplorable effects of *Adam's* apostasy. The whole animated creation, whatever has life, from *Leviathan* to the smallest mite, was thereby *made subject* to such *vanity*, as the inanimate creatures could not be. They were subject to that fell monster, death, the conqueror of all that breathe. They were made subject to its fore-runner, pain, in its ten thousand forms: although "GOD made not death, neither hath he pleasure in the death of any living." How many millions of creatures in the sea, in the air, and on every part of the earth, can now no otherwise preserve their own lives, than by taking away the lives of others; by tearing in pieces and devouring their poor, innocent, unresisting fellow-creatures! Miserable lot of such innumerable multitudes, who, insignificant as they seem, are the offspring of one common Father, the creatures of the same God of love! It is probable, not only two-thirds of the animal creation, but ninety-nine parts out of a hundred, are under a necessity of destroying others, in order to preserve their own life! But it shall not always be so. He that sitteth upon the throne, will soon change the face of all things, and give a demonstrative proof to all creatures, that *his mercy is over all his works*. The horrid state of things, which at present obtains, will soon be at an end. On the new earth, no creature will kill or hurt or give pain to any other. The scorpion will have no poisonous sting, the adder no venomous teeth. The lion will have no claws to tear the lamb; no teeth to grind his flesh and bones. Nay, no creature, no beast, bird or fish, will have any inclination to hurt any other. For cruelty will be far away, and savageness and fierceness be forgotten. So that violence shall be heard no more, neither wasting or destruction seen on the face of the earth. *The wolf shall dwell with the lamb*: (the words may be literally, as well as figuratively understood) *and the*



*leopard shall lie down with the kid. They shall not hurt or destroy, from the rising up of the sun, to the going down of the same.*

18. But the most glorious of all will be, the change which then will take place on the poor, sinful, miserable children of men. These had fallen in many respects as from a greater height, so into a lower depth than any other part of the creation. But they shall hear a great voice out of heaven, saying, *Behold, the tabernacle of GOD is with men. And he will dwell with them: and they shall be his people: and GOD himself shall be with them, and be their GOD,* Rev. xxi. ver. 3, 4. Hence will arise an unmixt state of holiness, and happiness, far superior to that which Adam enjoyed in Paradise. In how beautiful and affecting a manner is this described by the apostle! *GOD shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying. Neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.* As there will be no more death, and no more pain or sickness preparatory thereto: as there will be no more grieving for, or parting with friends, so there will be no more sorrow or crying. Nay, but there will be a greater deliverance than all this; for there will be no more sin in the new earth. And to crown all, there will be a deep, an intimate, an uninterrupted union with GOD: a constant communion with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, through the Spirit: a continual enjoyment of the Three-One GOD, and of all the creatures in him!

## AN EXTRACT

Of the Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 547.]

3. **N**OT to establish the power of *working miracles* as the great criterion of a divine mission; when scripture teaches us, that the agreement of doctrines with truth as taught in those scriptures, is the only infallible rule.

6. Not to drive any away from our *church*, by opprobriously calling them *dissenters*, or treating them as such, so long as they keep to her *communion*.

7. Not lightly to take up with *silly stories*, that may be propagated to the discredit of persons of a general *good character*.

I do not lay down (says he) these *negative rules*, so much for the sake of any person whom the unobservance of them would immediately injure, as of our *church* and her professed *defenders*. For churchmen, however *well-meaning*, would lay themselves open to censure, and might do her *irretrievable damage*, by a behaviour contrary to them."

*Friday August 3.* I met with one who *did* run well, but *satan* had hindered her. I was surprized at her ingenuous acknowledgement of the fear of man. *O how hardly shall even they who have rich acquaintance enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

*Sunday 5.* Six persons, at the *New-Room*, were deeply *convinced of sin*: Three of whom were a little comforted by prayer; but not yet *convinced of righteousness*.

Having frequently been invited to *Wells*, particularly by Mr.—, who begged me to make his house my home, on *Thursday* the 9th I went thither, and wrote him word the night before; upon which he presently went to one of his friends, and desired a messenger might be sent to meet me and beg me

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“To turn back, otherwise (said he) we shall all lose our trade.” But this consideration did not weigh with him, so that he invited me to his own house: And at eleven I preached in his ground, on *Christ our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*, to about 2000 persons. Some of them mocked at first, whom I reprov'd before all; and those of them who stay'd were more serious. Several spoke to me after, who were for the present much affected. O let it not pass away as the morning dew!

*Friday 10.* I had the satisfaction of conversing with a Quaker, and afterwards with an Anabaptist, who, I trust, have had a large measure of the love of GOD shed abroad in their hearts. O may those, in every persuasion, who are of this spirit increase a thousand fold, how many soever they be!

*Saturday 11.* In the evening two were seized with strong pangs; as were four the next evening, and the same number at *Gloucester-Lane* on *Monday*, one of whom was greatly comforted.

*Tuesday 14.* I preached at *Bradford* to about 3000 on *One thing is needful*. Returning through *Bath*, I preached to a small congregation suddenly gathered together at a little distance from the town (not being permitted to be in *R—M—'s* ground any more) on *The just shall live by faith*. Three at the *New-Room* this evening were cut to the heart. But their wound was not yet healed.

*Wednesday 15.* I endeavoured to guard those who were in their first love, from falling into inordinate affection, by explaining those strange words at *Baptist-Mills*, *Henceforth know we no man after the flesh*.

*Friday 17.* Many of our society met, as we had appointed, at one in the afternoon, and agreed “That all the members of our society should obey the church to which we belong, by observing *All Fridays in the year, as days of fasting or abstinence*.” We likewise agreed, That as many as had opportunity should then meet, to spend an hour together in prayer.

*Monday*

*Monday 20.* I preached on those words (to a much larger congregation than usual) *Oughtest not thou to have had compassion on thy fellow servant, as I had pity on thee?*

*Wednesday 22.* I was with many that were in heaviness: Two of whom were soon filled with peace and joy. In the afternoon I endeavoured to guard the weak against what too often occasions heaviness, levity of temper or behaviour, from, *I said of laughter, it is mad; and of mirth, What doth it?*

*Monday 27.* For two hours I took up my cross, in arguing with a zealous man, and labouring to convince him, "That I was not an enemy to the church of *England*." He allowed, "I taught no other doctrines than those of the church;" but could not forgive my teaching them *out of the church-walls*. He allowed too (which none indeed can deny, who has either any regard to truth or sense of shame) That "by this teaching many souls who till that time were perishing for lack of knowledge, have been, and are brought from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto GOD." But he added, "No one can tell, what *may be hereafter*; and therefore I say, these things ought not to be suffered."

Indeed the report now current in *Bristol* was, "That I was a *Papist*, if not a *Jesuit*." Some added, "That I was born and bred at *Rome*;" which many cordially believed. O ye fools, when will ye understand, That the preaching *justification by faith alone*, the allowing no meritorious cause of justification, but the death and righteousness of Christ, and no conditional or instrumental cause, but faith, is overturning Popery from the foundation? When will ye understand, that the most destructive of all those errors, which *Rome*, the mother of abominations hath brought forth (compared to which transubstantiation and a hundred more, are trifles light as air) is, *That we are justified by works*, (or to express the same thing a little more decently) by faith *and* works. Now, do I preach *this*? I did for ten years: I was (fundamentally) a *Papist*, and knew it not. But I do now testify to all (and it is the very point for



for asserting which I have to this day been called in question) That “no good works can be done before justification, none which have not in them the nature of sin.”

I have often enquired, who were the authors of this report; and have generally found they were either bigotted dissenters, or (I speak without fear or favour) ministers of our own church. I have also frequently considered, what possible ground or motive they could have thus to speak: Seeing few men in the world have had occasion so clearly and openly to declare their principles, as I have done, both by preaching, printing and conversation, for several years last past. And I can no otherwise think, than that either they spoke thus (to put the most favourable construction upon it) from gross ignorance; they knew not what popery was; they knew not what doctrines those are which the Papists teach: Or they wilfully spoke what they knew to be false, probably *thinking* thereby *to do GOD service*. Now, take this to yourselves, whosoever ye are, high or low, dissenters or churchmen, clergy or laity, who have advanced this shameless charge, and digest it how you can.

But how have ye not been afraid, if ye believe there is a GOD, and that he knoweth the secrets of your hearts (I speak now to you, preachers, more especially, of whatever denomination) to declare so gross, palpable a lie, in the name of the GOD of truth? I cite you all, before the Judge of all the earth, either publickly to prove your charge; or by publickly retracting it, to make the best amends you can, to GOD, to me and to the world.

For the full satisfaction of those who have been abused by these shameless men, and almost brought to believe a lie, I will here add my serious judgment concerning the church of Rome, wrote some time since to a priest of that communion:

SIR,

I RETURN you thanks both for the favour of your letter, and for your recommending my father's proposals to the Sorbonne.

I have

I have neither time nor inclination for controversy with any ; but least of all with the *Romanists*. And that both because I can't trust any of their quotations, without consulting every sentence they quote in the originals ; and because the originals themselves can very hardly be trusted, in any of the points controverted between them and us. I am no stranger to their skill in *mending* those authors, who did not at first speak home to their purpose ; as also in *purg- ing* them from those passages, which contradicted their emendations. And as they have not wanted opportunity to do this, so doubtless they have carefully used it, with regard to a point that so nearly concerned them, as the supremacy of the bishop of *Rome*. I am not therefore surpris'd, if the works of St. *Cyprian* (as they are called) do strenuously maintain it : but I am, that they have not been better *corrected* ; for they still contain passages that absolutely overthrow it. What gross negligence was it, to leave his 74th epistle (to *Pompeianus*) out of the *index expurgatorius* ? wherein *pope Cyprian* so flatly charges *pope Stephen*, with *pride and obstinacy, and with being a defender of the cause of hereticks, and that against Christians and the very church of GOD* ? He that can reconcile this with his believing *Stephen* the infallible head of the church, may reconcile the gospel with the *alcoran*.

Yet I can by no means approve the scurrility and contempt, with which the *Romanists* have often been treated. I dare not rail at, or despise any man ; much less those who profess to believe in the same master. But I pity them much ; having the same assurance that Jesus is the Christ, and that no *Romanist*, as such, can expect to be saved, according to the terms of his covenant. For thus saith our Lord, *Who-soever shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. And if any man shall add unto these things, GOD shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.* But all *Romanists*, as such, do both. Ergo——

The minor I prove, not from Protestant authors, or even from particular writers of their own communion : but from  
the



the public, authentic records of the church of *Rome*. Such are the *canons and decrees of the council of Trent*. And the edition I use was printed at *Colen*, and approved by authority.

And first, all *Romanists*, as such, do break and teach men to break, one (and not the least) of those commandments. The signification of *Exodus* xx. 5. which forbids the bowing to images (as every smatterer in *Hebrew* knows) is *in-caruare se*, \* *procumbere*, *honoris exhibendi causâ* (and is accordingly rendered by the seventy in this very place, by a *Greek* word of the very same import, *προσκυνῆν*) But the council of *Trent*, (and consequently all *Romanists*, as such, all who allow the authority of that council) teaches, session 25. para. 2. That it is ‡ *legitimus imaginum usus,—eis honorem exhibere*, *procumbendo coram eis*.

Secondly, All *Romanists*, as such, do add to those things which are written in the book of life. For in the bull of *Pius IV.* subjoined to those *canons and decrees*, I find all the additions following:

1. Seven sacraments, 2. Transubstantiation, 3. Communion in one kind only, 4. Purgatory, and praying for the dead therein, 5. Praying to saints, 6. Veneration of reliques, 7. Worship of images, 8. Indulgences, 9. The priority, and universality of the *Roman* church, 10. The supremacy of the bishop of *Rome*. All these things therefore do the *Romanists* add to those which are written in the book of life.

I am,——

\* To bow down before any one, in token of honouring him.

‡ i. e. The proper use of images is, to honour them, by bowing down before them.

(To be continued in Vol. III.)

## AN ACCOUNT

*Of the most remarkable Occurrences of the Life of*

JOSEPH EVERETT.

*[In a Letter to Bishop Asbury.]**(Continued from page 563.)*

I WENT forward in the way pointed out in GOD's word, until the fifth day of April 1778, between seven and eight in the evening. Then the Lord set my soul once more at liberty, by speaking me freely justified, and shedding abroad his love in my heart by the Holy Ghost. Then I knew that whoever was religious, loved every man whether Jew or Gentile. Then I felt that the love which I first received among the New Lights, and lost by departing from GOD, I now found among the Methodists: and could give them the right hand of fellowship.

I must now make some remarks on the very extraordinary conduct of the New Lights. They never, in a religious sense, took any notice of me; but looked on me as a person beneath their notice: they would pass by me as though they saw me not. Yet those very persons would conduct themselves as carnally, and were under the power of the flesh and the devil as much I was—they would drink to excess, love the world, persecute, get angry, indulge pride as much I did, and yet lay claim to the promises of the gospel—when I, who lived no worse, was judged by them down to perdition. A sure token of a pharisaical spirit. I hope I shall ever adore that GOD whose property it is to bring order out of confusion; who permitted me to fall, but raised me up again; or I might to this day have remained under the Antinomian delusion, sleeping with the foolish virgins in the high road to hell; calling on the name of the Lord, but doing the work of the devil; which I have reason to believe



is the case of the majority of those who hold such antiscip-  
tural tenets : from the infatuation of which I pray GOD to  
deliver my soul.

I now began to read, to know, and find out the truth ;  
that as the Lord had been pleased to bless me again with his  
favour, I wished to know the way to keep it, (a burnt  
child dreads the fire.) And by reading the authors above-  
mentioned, I began to discover the calvinistic cheat—and  
especially the latter, in his checks to antinomianism ; and the  
more I read, the plainer I saw the policy of the bottomless  
pit ; and from whence it originated. And from then un-  
til this day, the more I study its nature and tendency, the  
more I despise it ; and view it as a trap set by the devil, by  
which millions are eternally damned. I now constantly at-  
tended the preaching of the gospel by the Methodists. I  
loved them and took sweet counsel with them, but still did  
not join in society with them. And my supposed reason  
for it was this. I knew that they were a despised people,  
and thought if I did not join them I might be more useful,  
when it was known that I was not a member of their society.  
But I soon found this to be very poor logick ; for the children  
of the devil hate the light, let it come from where it will.  
I read Mr. *Wesley* on perfection ; but the mist of Calvinism  
was not altogether wiped from off my mind. With the Cal-  
vinists I was taught that temptations were sin. I did not  
attend to the law of GOD to find out what sin was. I  
could not distinguish between sin and infirmities ; and hard-  
ly believe that any Antinomian can. They say all we do  
is sin. We are told that the sacrifices of the wicked is an  
abomination to the Lord. But this is no proof that the  
children of GOD commit sin. I believe with the apostle,  
that he that is born of GOD sinneth not ;—and he that does  
is of the devil. I believe that in every justified soul, there  
is the root of every iniquity. Yet if he faithfully uses the  
grace and power already given to him, he thereby keeps  
himself from transgressing the law, which alone is sin ; and  
therefore the evil one, the devil, touches him not. And I  
believe that it is the privilege of every babe in Christ, to  
grow

grow in grace ; not only to be young men and to be strong, but to become fathers in Christ : to receive the fulness of all the rich promises of the gospel : such as the law of GOD on their hearts ; to love the Lord with all their soul ; to be dead to the world and crucified with Christ, &c. All which I believe to be the common privileges of all believers in this day. Though it is to be much lamented that many live beneath them. And I praise the Lord that I am as much confirmed in the doctrine of full sanctification, as I am that a man may know that his sins are forgiven on this side the grave.

I was generally asked, by the Methodists, to come into the class-room ; but they did not persuade me to join. In reading and conversing with the Methodists, I began to *feel* the necessity of joining the society : which I did with this view, to grow in grace myself, and to strengthen the hands of the preachers in the work of GOD. Because I thought it to be the will of GOD ; which ought to be our end in all we do. I saw the necessity of mortifying the corrupt cravings of the flesh, as well as using all the means of grace, in order to be perfected in love ; which constitutes a Methodist.

By this time I found myself well pleased with the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists ; and felt something in me that wanted others to partake of the love of GOD that had made me happy ; and from this principle I began to speak to my acquaintance about their souls, and sometimes to preach ; and found, that what was spoken did not altogether fall to the ground.

So I went on, by little and little, till I found that some were wrought on ; and at last I was deeply exercised from day to day about preaching, and telling to the world what GOD had done for my soul ; and wherever I went it continually followed me. Frequently in family prayer, the power of the Lord would descend in such a manner, as caused the people to mourn and cry ; and sometimes they were not able to rise from the floor, for half a night or more. My exercise about preaching used to be such, that I have been frequently awakened from my sleep, and found myself preaching.

One



One thing I would not forget, while I was in the way to hell, I lived without labour for the most part of my time, but as soon as I got religion, or the love of GOD in my soul, I set out to labour and keep under the wicked flesh; which is a sufficient conviction to me that a life of idleness is a life of wickedness. I now earned my bread by the labour of my hands: and believe no man can live long in the favour of GOD, without using proper care to provide for himself and his household.

In this manner I lived, and studied divinity at the plow, axe, or hoe, instead of the college. I never had discovered my exercise to any person all this time, and the reason was this: I saw so much of my own weakness and inability for such an important calling, as kept my mouth shut. Ten thousand difficulties would shut up the way; and made it appear an impossibility, yet it constantly pursued me. At last, I ventured to disclose my heart to my dear friend *E. W.* When he heard what I had said, he made little or no answer, as I remember.

At that time, *Caleb B. Peddicord*, that man of GOD, was riding in the circuit, and was to preach near Mr. *White's* the next day, in *Delaware* state; and sent for me to meet him there. I was well acquainted with him, and went to meet him. After he had preached, he asked me to give an exhortation, which I did; and before we parted, he gave me a certificate to exhort.

I continued to preach and speak to the people, and found considerable freedom; I was respected by the Methodists, but my name was despised by the blind world. This continued until *October* the first, in the year 1780, when after my crop was nearly done, I went to *Dorset* circuit, and stayed four weeks: for at that time they were persecuting the preachers that had not taken the oath of fidelity, and had committed *Freshborn Garrettson* to prison. As I had taken the oath, I went. In *Dorset* I had seals to my ministry. I returned to secure my crop, but by that time the devil, by his emissaries, had infused it into the heart of my wife, to prevent my travelling. She made a great noise,  
which

which gave me much trouble. I might as well undertake to reason with a stone. It appears to me that Satan exerted all his power to prevent me from travelling to preach. Till now my wife had some faint desire to save her soul; but this banished all from her heart. About this time you held a temporary conference at Mr. *White's*, with the preachers on the peninsula; and hearing that I was exercised about preaching, you sent for me; when I came, you asked me some questions on the subject, and by what came to pass, I expect you approved of my answers. You asked the preachers if they had fellowship with me; and all who knew me answered in the affirmative. The matter was settled on this condition: brother *Peddicord* was appointed to *Dorset*; and when he came there, was to enquire, whether the people approved of me, as I had been there before; if so, I was to go to *Dorset* again. He went, and in two weeks he sent for me. I set out for my circuit, and when I came, I began to preach, and continued till *February*. The Lord publicly owned and blessed my labours.

About this time brother *Peddicord*, who was the assistant, let me know that he had received a letter from you, to send me to *Annamesset* circuit. I left *Dorset*, and came home to see my wife, who still opposed my travelling. I still held my integrity; and after being at home some days, I went to a quarter-meeting at Mr. *White's*, where a number of preachers were collected, whom I viewed as my superiors: and among the rest S. R. who had come from *Annamesset* circuit to *Caroline* quarter-meeting, and was going back. When I came to the circuit, J. G. M. was to come from *Annamesset* for me to take his place. He was gone to the lower end, and it was some days before he came up. While I waited for him, we had several meetings, and there was a stir; six or eight were awakened. The wicked threatened, and some that were half-hearted Methodists were not well pleased. When the preacher came, I set forward; and as there were three preachers in the circuit, it was six weeks before I got round; and when I came to the place where I first began to preach, five or six of them had found peace with



with the Lord. This fired me with fresh courage, as tho' I should soon conquer Satan. Thus I went on till April or May. S. R. and J. W. were removed to other circuits, and I was continued there. The circuit was enlarged for four preachers; and there was a good work carried on. Before I left this place, some large societies were formed, and many found peace with the Lord; who I hope will praise him to all eternity. I had sweet fellowship with these people. Here the Lord owned me, and blessed my labours in an abundant manner.

I continued in this place till November, when I came up to *Barret's* chapel to a quarterly meeting; then you appointed me to travel in *West Jersey* with J. O. C. whom I loved and looked upon as a good man. We laboured there till the May-conference; and my labours were owned, and many seals set to my ministry. From thence, I was appointed to the *East Jersey*, with that man of GOD *John Tunnell*, whom I loved as an other self. We laboured in sweet fellowship until November; the Lord also owned his word, through my weak instrumentality. In the *West Jersey*, I was opposed by the Baptists, and beset by Lutherans. They would have put a period to my life, but my Master had more work for me to do.

I was then appointed to *Philadelphia*, with *John Tunnell* and *Nelson Reed*. Here we continued till May conference, not without success. In this circuit the Lord owned our labours. That part of the circuit that profited least by our ministry, was the city; and I believe for the following reason.—They resemble too much the Corinthians; one saying I am of *Paul*, another I am of *Apollos*, and another I am of *Cephas*. Where this is the case, there are very few to follow Christ. They are like weather-cocks, which can never be kept at one point. After May-conference I was appointed to travel in *Baltimore*, with I. C. and M. E. where the Lord still blest his word, and made me an instrument for good, to his glory, to many. Many in this place were dear to my soul. By this time, I got to see into the Bible in a deeper manner than ever. I began to see the gospel method

of saving souls ; so that the Bible seemed like an other, or rather like a new book to me. By this time, the Lord had heard and answered my prayers in the conversion of my wife ; which in a great measure lightened my burden.

She saw how she had been fighting against the Lord, in treating me wrongfully ; which wounded her very sensibly ; and this was sweet revenge to me. Here I saw the word of the Lord was fulfilled, to wit, "be not weary in well-doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not." That man should always pray and not faint. She had no more to object to my travelling. I likewise saw that the measure she gave to me, was measured to her again. Her very children spoke evil of her and hated her company. From *Baltimore*, you wrote to me to go to *Frederick-circuit*, and take care of it as the assistant. I went, and *R. S.* and *D. A.* travelled with me. I was appointed at the next conference to *Fairfax-circuit* ; where I continued to labour till the Christmas conference, when *Dr. Coke* came from *England*, and the Methodist church separated from all connection or dependance on the church of *England*, or any other body or society of people. From this conference, I was stationed in *Berkley-circuit*, where the Lord signally owned and blessed my ministry, in the awakening and conversion of many souls. From this place I was appointed to the *Norward Necks*, where *L. R.* was to travel with me. Here I continued to travel for a year ; in a place where the Methodists had never preached ; and where I had the honour to preach free grace to the people. I was kindly received by them, as a stranger, and had invitations to preach : when I came the place was overspread with Calvinistic stuff ; such as unconditional reprobation and election ; final perseverance ; adult baptism, &c. I set in to deliver my message, in the presence of *Mr. Lunsford* the Baptist parson ; who I believe was not well pleased at my coming. From thence I went down to *Lancaster court-house*, and preached the next sabbath to a numerous congregation in the Presbyterian meeting-house. The Lord enabled me to speak strong words to these people, and I believe that this day the Lord began a work



work in this place that will in glory end. I got sundry places to preach in, and so proceeded on till I formed a four weeks' circuit; and continued to preach from place to place; till conviction for sin began to follow the word, which brought on godly sorrow and repentance never to be repented of. Then I taught them the nature and necessity of gospel discipline, in order to render the preaching, the power of GOD to salvation.

I joined them in class as they felt their wants, and before I left that place, which was in April following, I joined between two and three hundred in society; and about one hundred and twenty of these found, that GOD is able to forgive sin for Christ's sake. This was a people which I loved as a father loveth his children. Here I was importuned to set up my tabernacle; and if filthy lucre could have effected it, I should have yielded to their entreaties; but my answer to them was, I loved them too well, and that if I granted their request we should be a curse to each other. And I am confident that the preacher who leaves the Methodist connexion, and sets up among a people elsewhere, as a separate body; that moment he departs from the Lord; and if continued in, inevitable ruin will be the consequence. I now took my journey for conference, in company with *N. Reed*, and came to *Baltimore*; and from thence to *Abingdon*, where I was ordained a deacon on the tenth day of May 1786; and was appointed to travel in *Dorset*-circuit with *S. D.* Here the power of religion was on the decline, but the Lord soon kindled it into a flame. And I believe it was caused by culling the societies and keeping up proper discipline in the church of GOD. I view it as a capital fault in a Methodist preacher not to be a disciplinarian. And if ever our church loses the life of religion, it will be for want of discipline. From conference 1787, I was appointed to *Annamesset* with *M. G.* where I stayed until conference 1788. In this place the Lord brought in some stubborn sinners, and here I culled the societies; and hope I made way for my successors to be useful.

I went

I went down to *Cape Charles* through *Northampton*, a place poisoned by filthy Antinomian principles, and urged the necessity of letting the oppressed go free; for which I was almost obliged to run the gauntlet. I believe when the Lord first sent the Methodists into *America* to preach the gospel, many got converted who held slaves; and all that continued faithful, after some time, the Lord convinced them it was wrong to keep them; and all who rejected conviction lost their right to the favour of GOD. But at this time I fear, all who hold their slaves may go to hear the gospel preached all their days, but if they do not give up their oppressive manner of living, the word of GOD will be a favour of death unto their souls, and that they will die in their sins and in their blood; and will be damned for their wickedness.

On leaving *Annameßex* to go to the conference at *Baltimore*, I received a letter from you, to meet you at *Philadelphia*, on the twentieth day of September, instead of *Baltimore*; which I did, and was ordained an elder on the twenty fifth day of September, 1788. And from thence was appointed to travel in *Caroline*-circuit with *M. G.* and *B. R.* where I now am, and humbly hope the Lord will continue to go with me, and by his grace preserve my soul from every evil.

I am in the fifty sixth year of my age, and have been a member of the Methodist church ten years; and have travelled as a preacher going on nine years since the first day of October: and I can appeal to him who knows my heart, that I have no more desire to quit travelling than I had the first day I began. Neither any more intention to leave the principles and discipline of the Methodist church; than I have to quit the exercise of my reason. But can say with the poet,

What a mercy is this,

What a heaven of bliss,

How unspeakably happy am I!



Gather'd into the fold,

With thy people enrol'd,

With thy people to live and to die!

O! the goodness of GOD

In employing a clod,

His tribute of glory to raise;

His standard to bear,

And with triumph declare

His unspeakable riches of grace.

O! the fathomless love,

That has deign'd to approve

And to prosper the work of my hands:

With my pastoral crook

I past over the brook;

And behold I am spread into bands!

In a rapture of joy

My life I employ,

The GOD of my life to proclaim:

'Tis worth living for this,

To administer bliss,

And salvation in Jesus's name.

My remnant of days

I'll spend in his praise,

Who dy'd the whole world to redeem;

Be they many or few,

My days are his due;

And they all are devoted to him.

Thus I have gone through nearly all the most remarkable passages of my travels to the present time.

I have been cast on the tempestuous ocean of this world, and who or what but him who never slumbers nor sleeps has preserved me until now. Vast numbers of my acquaintance and friends are gone into eternity, and I am still spared.

spared. And what reason can be given for it? Was it decreed from eternity to be so, let me act right or wrong? I expect not. But because the Lord was not willing that I should die in my sins—but waited with me till I was enabled, by his grace, to bring forth in some measure fruit to his glory. I wish to be more conformable to his will in all things. I hope my last days may be my best days; and when I have done his work below, I may lose myself in the ocean of divine love and praise him to all eternity.

JOSEPH EVERETT,

Milford, December 13, 1788.

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*A letter from the Rev. Dr. MAGAW to bishop ASBURY.*

Philadelphia, July 1790.

*Rev. & dear Friend!*

WHERE one is assured of the kindness and sincerity of another, a communication, in whatever way, is comfortable. Had I to impart, what would be worth denominating joy; if you were inclined to share in it, I verily believe, it would be chiefly with the view of rendering it back to me, still greater. And now, when I am in sorrow, (mark how generous I become) I make over to you, a part, merely to make my own the less.

Sorrow! yes, beloved brother—but it is such, as is not without hope.

The event hath taken place, which I have long had warning to prepare for: *Your* sister in the Lord,—*my* Mrs. Magaw, is, with respect to time, *no more*.

I enter not into particulars here: but in general, do assure you, that it pleased the Almighty, both in her long-continued illness, and her death, to administer great grace to her, and to me. Her soul rejoiced indeed in GOD,

her



her Saviour: and every movement of it became, at last, assimilated to the nature of the heavenly rest which she panted after.

I am left; and am encompassed with infirmities. In the midst of these, I feel, at times, dejection. Again, I revive—I pause—I meditate—I look around—I turn my thoughts inward—I am amazed—I would be confounded; but that He who hath laid affliction upon me, does not withdraw his presence in the time of it.

It should be a *Friend indeed*, that one would lay his mind open to, at a season like this. It is not every body that can go along with the afflicted: his sensations are matters that strangers intermeddle not with; and can be no proper judges of. I can lodge my weaknesses with you, as well as my consolation, that raises me now and then, above them.

You will readily suppose, that, at certain moments, my thoughts revert to the time, when you, and my little family became acquainted first; and the peaceful, heart-felt intercourse we frequently enjoyed afterwards.—You recollect with me, the quiet retreat, in the forest of *Dover*; the lowly mansion; the innocently-social fire-side;—and, in its season, the cool, inviting breeze, and the meditating walk: you recollect the morning and evening addresses to the Deity; the hymns of gratitude which were sung;—the doors, which the hospitable good woman did not forget to set open for strangers;—thereby, possibly, “entertaining angels unawares.”—You remember the converse ever pleasing, on redemption’s price and power.—Yes, my brother! such recollection, to me, is not a vain thing: I feel it doing me good now. ’Tis true, it spreads a kind of melancholy through me: but it is a melancholy, which I might venture to pronounce *divine*.

Ah! how the subject of my grief returns upon me! I suppose, in my present situation, I might innocently borrow relief from different quarters, provided I do not lay too much stress upon any considerations which are merely subordinate. Philosophy may yield one some support.

The

The sayings of sages, and experienced men, in different periods of the world, are not without their use. The notices which reason or common sense suggests, are not destitute of force. But, it is to the glorious gospel *only*, that I look for the arguments that satisfy, and *fill up all the mind*; and there I *find* them. "Blessed be GOD, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the GOD of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble."

I value you sincerely, and am; with the same affection as ever,

Your brother and servant in Christ,

SAMUEL MAGAW.

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*On the shortness of LIFE, and uncertainty of RICHES.*

[Extracted from a late Author.]

**I**F you should see a man who was to cross from *Dover* to *Calais*, run about very busy, and solicitous, and trouble himself many weeks before in making provisions for his voyage, would you commend him, as a cautious and discreet person? or laugh at him, as a timorous and impertinent coxcomb?

A man who is excessive in his pains and diligence, and who consumes the greatest part of his time in furnishing the remainder thereof with all conveniencies, and even superfluities, is, to angels, and wise men, no less ridiculous: he does as little consider the shortness of his passage, that he might proportion his cares accordingly. It is, alas! so narrow a streight betwixt the womb and the grave, that it might be called the *Pas de vie*, as well as that, the *Pas de Calais*. We are all *ἑφ' ἡμέρας*, (as *Pindar* calls us) creatures of



of a day; and therefore our Saviour bounds our desires to that little space: as if it were very probable that every day should be our last, we are taught to demand even our bread for no longer a time.

The sun ought not to set upon our covetousness, any more than upon our anger; but as in the esteem of GOD Almighty, a thousand years are as one day; so in direct opposition, one day, to the covetous, may be as a thousand years. So far he shoots beyond his butt, that one would think he was of the opinion of the Milleniaries, and hoped for so long a reign upon earth.

The patriarchs before the flood, who enjoyed almost such a life, made, we are sure, less stores for the maintaining of it. They who lived nine hundred years scarcely provided for a few days. We who live but a few days, provide for, at least, nine hundred years. What a strange alteration is this of human life and manners? and yet we see an imitation of it in every man's particular experience. For we begin not the cares of life, till life is half spent; and then we still increase them as that decreases! What is there among the actions of beasts so illogical and repugnant to reason? When they do any thing which seems to proceed from reason, we disdain to allow them that perfection, and attribute it only to a natural instinct. And are not we fools too by the same kind of instinct? If we could but learn to number our days (as we are taught to pray that we might) we should much better adjust our other accounts. But whilst we never consider an end of them, it is no wonder if our cares be without end too! From a short life then cut off all hopes that grow too long. They must be pruned away like suckers that rob the mother plant, and hinder it from bearing fruit.

*Seneca* gives an example of an acquaintance of his, named *Senecio*, who from a very mean beginning, by great industry in turning about money, through all ways of gain, had attained to extraordinary riches; but died on a sudden after having supped merrily, in the full course of his good fortune,

tune, when she had a high tide, and stiff gale, and all her sails on ; upon which occasion he cries, out of *Virgil*,

Go *Melibæus*, now

Go graft thy orchards, and thy vineyards plant,

Behold thy fruit !

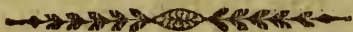
For this *Senecio* I have no compassion, because he was taken as we say, in ipso facto, still labouring in the work of avarice. But the poor, rich man in *St. Luke* (whose case was not like this) I could pity, if the scripture would permit me. For he seems to be satisfied at last ; he confesses he had enough for many years : he bids his soul take its ease ; and yet for all that, *GOD* says to him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and then the things thou hast laid up, whom shall they belong to ? Where shall we find the causes of this bitter reproach, and terrible judgment ? We may find I think, two, and *GOD* perhaps saw more. First, he did not intend true rest to his soul ; but only to change the employments of it from avarice to luxury, his design was to eat and to drink, and be merry. Secondly, that he went on too long before he thought of resting. The fulness of his old barns had not sufficed him. He would stay till he was forced to build new ones ; and *GOD* meted out to him in the same measure ; since he would have more riches than his life could contain, *GOD* destroyed his life and gave the fruits of it to another. Thus *GOD* sometimes takes away the man from his riches, and no less frequently the riches from the man ; what hope can there be of such a marriage, where both parties are so fickle and uncertain ? By what bonds can such a couple be kept long together ?

Some



*Some Rules of Holy Living: Extracted from a late Author.*

**I** CANNOT say, I have already attained; but this is that which my heart is set to learn. That in all I do, whether sacred or civil actions, still I may be doing but one work; and driving on one design, That GOD may be pleased by me, and glorified in me: That not only my praying, preaching and alms, may be found upon my account; but even my eating, drinking, sleeping, visits and discourses; because they are done to GOD. Too often do I miss my mark; but I will tell you what are the rules I set myself; never to lie down but in the name of GOD: not barely for natural refreshment; but that a wearied servant of Christ may be recruited and fitted to serve him better the next day. Never to rise up but with this resolution, I will go forth this day in the name of GOD, and will make religion my business, and spend the day for eternity. Never to enter upon my calling, but first thinking, I will do these things as unto GOD, because he requireth these things at my hands, in the place and station he hath put me into. Never to sit down to table, but resolving I will not eat merely to please my appetite; but to strengthen myself for my Master's work. Never to make a visit, but to leave something of GOD where I go; and in every company to leave a good savour behind. This is that which I am pressing hard after: and if I strive not to walk by these rules, let this paper be a witness against me.



*From* ALEXANDER FORBES, *to the* Rev. J. WESLEY.

Pembroke, Nov. 8, 1775.

*Rev. Sir,*

**A**S my design in writing the following lines is, that GOD may be glorified, I am persuaded you will pardon the freedom I have taken.

I was born in the province of Ulster in Ireland, and at the age of seven years could read the bible tollerably well.

My

My parents perceiving in me an aptness for learning, had some thoughts of having me taught the languages; but their designs were frustrated by the following accident. A cow running her horn into my mouth, tore it in such a manner that the roof thereof was laid almost across my throat, and occasioned my food often to gush out at my nostrils. Yet, blessed be GOD! I was cured, and without any outward deformity.

When near seventeen years of age, I enlisted in the forty sixth regiment of foot, where following the example of my licentious comrades, I plunged into all manner of sin. Thus I continued until I entered upon my twenty-first year, when lo! GOD convinced me of my sinfulness and helplessness. On this I sought the Lord in earnest, and soon found rest in him. I continued happy for sometime; but giving way to trifling, I lost the precious pearl. I continued in this state about fifteen months; but being bred a Calvinist, I imagined it was only a "winter season," and that as I was once justified, I could never entirely make shipwreck of my faith.

As I sat one day with my comrades, I observed a leaf falling from a tree; whereupon I reasoned thus: That leaf returns to earth, its original mother; so must my body. But where must my soul go then? This was like thunder to me. On this I instantly left my companions, went to my bible and read the following words, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the people that forget GOD." I then knew not what to do! Whatever way I looked, I saw destruction before me. Then, in the bitterness of my soul, I cried, Lord, save or I perish! On reading my bible again, I found the following words, "Though thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return unto me, saith the Lord." O, thought I, will the Lord receive such a wretch as me! Then looking farther, I read, "I will heal your backslidings and love you freely." This gave me some comfort. I saw such tenderness in Jesus, as emboldened me to pray. I wrestled, groaned, and pleaded with GOD



for an answer of peace; and in less than two days, I again found a sense of pardon.

After some time I found the firrings of evil passions, which lessened my joy, and caused me sometimes to doubt of my justification. But in a short time the Lord dispelled these clouds, and cleared up my evidence. After this, Satan assaulted me with many fore temptations. Among other things, I was more confirmed in Calvinism than ever. But after some time a soldier convinced me of the inconsistency of my doctrines: particularly of absolute, unconditional election and reprobation. From this time forth I grew in grace. But the stoppage in my speech still continued, insomuch that sometimes I could hardly tell my experience to my brethren.

Near seven months ago, being sorely burthened with inbred sin, I was often constrained to cry out, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? when lo! on Wednesday the 19th of April last, just as Mr. D. had done preaching, the Lord filled my soul with love. O how lovely was Jesus to me then! I shouted out, Hallelujah to GOD and the Lamb! All praise to the prince of peace! After praying to, and praising GOD, I departed with heaven in my soul, I could say, surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength. I was as sure that my soul was cleansed from all filthiness, as ever I was that my sins were pardoned. But what was matter of more praise, my tongue was loosed and I could speak plain! And whereas I used to shake my head, and distort my face in speaking, I could now converse with great ease. My understanding was also much enlightened; for what was formerly hidden, was now open and plain. Since that time GOD has given me some ability to preach, which I have found almost as easy to do as to read.

When I communicated my mind to some of the preachers, they told me, the loosing of my tongue was a sign that GOD intended I should use it in proclaiming the sinner's Friend; but for farther direction they desired me to go to the All-wise GOD, which I did.

About

About a month ago, I embarked for America, with a resolution of publishing the gospel there, or wherever else GOD should cast my lot. But being by contrary winds drove into Milford-haven, and an order having come from government for us to stay in South Wales till further orders, I now embrace the opportunity of craying your advice. And I earnestly request that you will write to me soon: for a few lines from you may be a great encouragement to me, who am willing to spend and be spent in exercising my tongue to the glory of him who has loosened it. It may also remove prejudice from weak minds, who may otherwise be offended at hearing a soldier invite sinners to the gospel feast: not considering that GOD sends by whom he will send, and that the weaker the instrument, the greater his glory!

With all due respect, I am, Rev. Sir, yours at command,

A. F.

He preached some time in America with great success; but being wounded in an engagement, a few days after died gloriously in the full triumph of faith.

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## Poetry.

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### On CONTENTMENT.

**F**AREWEL, aspiring thoughts, no more

My soul shall leave the peaceful shore;

To sail ambition's main;

Fallacious as the harlot's kiss,

You promise me uncertain bliss,

But give me certain pain.

A beauteous prospect first you shew,

Which ere survey'd, you paint anew,

And paint it wondrous pleasant:

This



This in a third is quickly lost ;  
 Thus future good we covet most,  
 But ne'er enjoy the present.

Deluded on from scene to scene,  
 We never end, but still begin,  
 By flatt'ring hope betray'd :  
 I'm weary of the painful chace,  
 Let others run this endless race,  
 To catch a flying shade.

Let others boast their useless wealth ;  
 Have I not honesty and health,  
 Which riches cannot give ?  
 Let others to preferment soar,  
 And changing liberty for power,  
 In golden shackles live.

'Tis time at length I should be wise,  
 'Tis time to seek substantial joys,  
 Joys out of fortune's pow'r :  
 Wealth, honours, dignity, and fame,  
 Are joys the blind capricious dame  
 Takes from us ev'ry hour.

Come, conscious virtue, fill my breast,  
 And bring content, thy daughter, drest  
 In ever smiling charms.  
 Let sacred friendship too attend,  
 A friendship worthy of my friend,  
 Such as my Lelius warms.

With these I'll in my bosom make  
 A bulwark fortune cannot shake,  
 Though all her storms arise :  
 Look down and pity gilded slaves,  
 Despise ambition's giddy knaves,  
 And wish the fools were wise.

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